

THE FIRST
TRUE ACCOUNT
OF
LINCOLN'S
ASSASSINATION

THE ESCAPE
AND
SUICIDE
OF
JOHN WILKES
BOOTH



BATES



ILLUSTRATED

1907

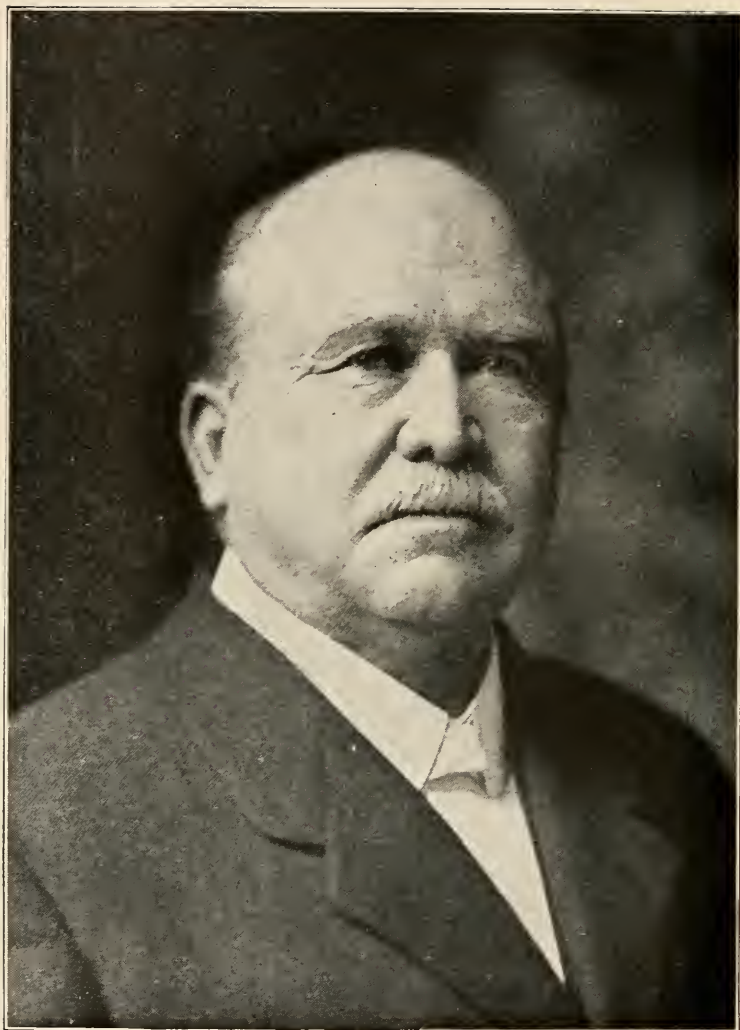
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F. L. BATES, Author.

THE ESCAPE AND SUICIDE
OF
JOHN WILKES BOOTH

OR THE FIRST TRUE ACCOUNT OF
LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION
CONTAINING
A COMPLETE CONFESSION BY BOOTH
MANY YEARS AFTER THE CRIME

GIVING IN FULL DETAIL THE PLANS, PLOT AND INTRIGUE
OF THE CONSPIRATORS, AND THE TREACHERY
OF ANDREW JOHNSON, THEN VICE-PRESI-
DENT OF THE UNITED STATES

WRITTEN FOR THE CORRECTION OF HISTORY

BY
FINIS L. BATES

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FINIS L. BATES,
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE.

PREFACE

In the preparation of this book I have neither spared time or money, since I became satisfied that John Wilkes Booth was not killed, as has been supposed, at the Garrett home in Virginia, on the 26th day of April, 1865, and present this volume of collated facts, which I submit for the correction of history, respecting the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, and the death or escape of John Wilkes Booth.

Personally, I know nothing of President Lincoln, and knew nothing of John Wilkes Booth until my meeting with John St. Helen, at my home in Texas, in the year 1872.

The picture which John St. Helen left with me for the future identification of himself in his true name and personality, was first identified by Gen. D. D. Dana, of Lubec, Maine, as John Wilkes Booth, January 17, 1898.

The second time by Junius Brutus Booth, the third, of Boston, Mass., (he being the oldest living nephew of John Wilkes Booth), on the 21st day of February, 1903, at Memphis, Tenn.

The third time by the late Joe Jefferson (the world's famous Rip Van Winkle), at Memphis,

PREFACE.

Tennessee, on the 14th day of April, 1903, just thirty-eight years to a day from the date of the assassination of President Lincoln. I here make mention of this identification because of its importance. Among the personal acquaintances of John Wilkes Booth none would know him better than Mr. Jefferson, who was most closely associated with him for several years, both playing together on the same stage. I know of no man whose knowledge of Booth is more to be trusted, or whose words of identification will carry more weight to the world at large. While there are many other important personages equally to be relied upon that have identified his pictures there is none other so well known to the general public, having identified the picture taken of John St. Helen, in 1877, as being that of John Wilkes Booth—thus establishing the fact of actual physical proof that John Wilkes Booth was living in 1872, when I met him under the name of John St. Helen, as also when he had his picture taken and left with me in the late winter or early spring of 1878, twelve years after the assassination of President Lincoln.

It is well in this connection to call attention to other physical proofs of the identification of John Wilkes Booth by referring to the deformed right thumb, just where it joined the hand, and the mismatched brows, his right brow being arched and unlike the left. The deformity of the right

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

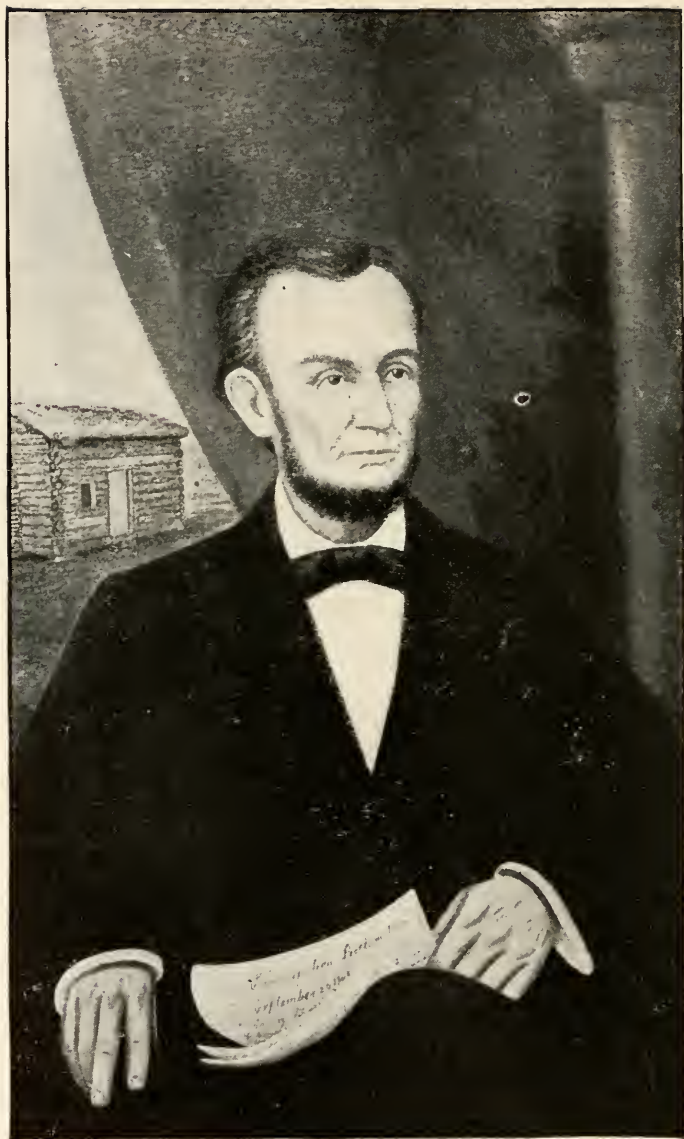
	PAGE
Chapter I. Lincoln-Booth	1
Chapter II. John St. Helen	5
Chapter III. John St. Helen Lectures Roland Read.....	18
Chapter IV. St. Helen's Illness	27
Chapter V. St. Helen's Identity Revealed	33
Chapter VI. The Assassination	40
Chapter VII. The Man Killed at the Garrett Home.....	60
Chapter VIII. The Separation	83
Chapter IX. The Pursuit of Booth	92
Chapter X. The East Potomac Bridge	121
Chapter XI. The Hand of Secretary Stanton	132
Chapter XII. Gen. Dana Identifies Booth.....	168
Chapter XIII. A Baltimorean Still	191
Chapter XIV. Informing the War Department that Booth Lives	205
Chapter XV. Gen. Albert Pike Identified Booth.....	222
Chapter XVI. Press Comments on the Suicide of David E. George	243
Chapter XVII. These are Pictures of John Wilkes Booth..	274
Chapter XVIII. Reading the Palm of John Wilkes Booth..	292
Chapter XIX. Joseph Jefferson Identifies John Wilkes Booth	299
Chapter XX. Junius Brutus Booth Identifies His Uncle, John Wilkes Booth	304

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
F. L. Bates.....	Frontispiece
John Wilkes Booth (age 27).....	0-1
Abraham Lincoln	0-1
Booth's Bed Confession.....	32-33
Complete Confession to Mr. Bates.....	32-33
Andrew Johnson.....	42-43
Jefferson Davis.....	42-43
Ford's Theater	46-47
Fleeing on Horseback.....	46-47
Dr. Stewart's Summer Home.....	56-57
The Home of Mr. Jones.....	56-57
Booth Disguised as Teamster.....	56-57
Booth and his Horse Tired Out.....	56-57
Gen. D. D. Dana	92-93
The Surratt Tavern.....	92-93
Gen. C. C. Augur.....	120-121
Mrs. Surratt.....	120-121
David E. Herold.....	162-163
Bryantown.....	162-163
Gen. Lew Wallace.....	172-173
Edwin Booth.....	172-173
Home of Dr. Mudd.....	188-189
Riding Boot of Booth.....	188-189
Clara Morris, Actress.....	196-197
Joseph Jefferson, the Actor	196-197
John Wilkes Booth (age 38).....	202-203
Junius Brutus Booth, the First.....	202-203
Gen. Albert Pike.....	222-223
Booth as a House-painter	222-223
John Wilkes Booth (age 64).....	276-277
The Mummified Hand of John Wilkes Booth.....	276-277



JOHN WILKES BOOTH, AGED 38.
The Picture Taken at Glenrose Mills, Texas, on the Bosque
River. (A reproduction from the tin-type.)



PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Holding the Proclamation of Emancipation, and the Log Cabin Near Salem, Kentucky, Where He Was Born.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

AND

JOHN WILKES BOOTH, THE ACTOR.

THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN
BY JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

CHAPTER I.

LINCOLN—BOOTH

President Abraham Lincoln was born near Salem, Kentucky, United States of America, in a log cabin, on the 12th day of February, 1809, of humble parentage, and was president of the Northern Federal States of America, after the secession of the Southern States, beginning March 4th, 1861, whereby was brought about a temporary dissolution of the Union of the United States of America, when the political issues of the rights of States to withdraw and secede from the Union of States and the constitutional right

LINCOLN—BOOTH.

John Wilkes Booth gets his name of John Wilkes from his great-great-grandfather, and his strikingly handsome personality from his great-great-grandmother. Thus it is said that John Wilkes Booth is given to the world from an ancestry known to England in their day as the Beauty and Beast.

John Wilkes Booth was a partisan in his sympathies for the success of the Southern Confederate States in the Civil War, bold and outspoken in his friendship for the South and his well wishes for the triumph of the Southern cause. In politics a Democrat, and by religion a Catholic, and a son of Junius Brutus Booth, the first, who was known to all men of his day as the master of the art of dramatic acting, being himself descended from the Booth family of actors in England, pre-eminently great as tragedians since the beginning of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER II.

JOHN ST. HELEN

I have long hesitated to give to the world the true story of the plot first to kidnap and finally assassinate President Lincoln by John Wilkes Booth and others, as related to me in 1872, and at other times thereafter, by one then known to me as John St. Helen, but in truth and in fact, as afterward developed, John Wilkes Booth himself, in person telling this story more than seven years after the assassination of President Lincoln, and the supposed killing of Booth at the Garret home, in Virginia. Far removed from the scene of his crime, he told me the tale of his dastardly deed at Grandberry, Hood county, Texas, a then comparative frontier town of the great Western empire of these American States.

This story I could not accept as a fact without investigation, believing, as the world believed, that John Wilkes Booth had been killed at the Garret home in Virginia on or about the 26th day of April, 1865, by one Boston Corbett, connected with the Federal troops in pursuit of him, after he (Booth) had been passed through the Federal military lines

JOHN ST. HELEN.

which formed a complete cordon surrounding the City of Washington, D. C., on the night of and after the assassination of President Lincoln. But after many years of painstaking and exhaustive investigation, I am now unwillingly, and yet unanswerably, convinced that it is a fact that Booth was not killed, but made good his escape by the assistance of some of the officers of the Federal Army and government of the United States, located at Washington—traitors to President Lincoln, in whose keeping was his life—co-operating with Capt. Jett and Lieuts. Rugles and Bainbridge, of the Confederate troops, belonging to the command of Col. J. S. Mosby, encamped at Bowling Green, Virginia. And the correctness of these statements, as well as to my convictions, the readers of this story must witness for or against the conclusion reached, for it is to the American people that I appeal that they shall hear the unalterable facts to the end that they may bear testimony with me to the civilized world that the death of America's martyred President, Lincoln, was not avenged, as we have been persuaded to believe, and that it remained the pleasure of the assassin to take his own life as how and when it best pleased him, conscious of his great individual crime and the nation's loss by the death of President Lincoln, the commission of which crime takes rank among the

JOHN ST. HELEN.

that he (St. Helen) should be protected from indictment and from any other process which would carry him before the Federal Court. With this agreement we separated for the few intervening days requested by him.

At this interview it was plainly to be seen that St. Helen was sorely troubled and seemed to think his final determination in the matter would be fraught with the greatest consequences to himself, much more, I thought, than was due to the apprehension of a possible conviction for the charges alleged against my client. But upon consideration of the matter I was led to the conclusion that his restless and uneasy manner was due to his long outdoor life on the plains, and that by force of habit he had acquired that restless and hunted, worried expression constantly on his face, while the flashes which came from his keen, penetrating black eyes spoke of desperation and capacity for crime. All this time his breath came hard, almost to a wheeze, superinduced by excitement, or what seemed to be a disease, possibly produced by exposure and bordering upon a bronchial or an asthmatic affliction of the throat and chest. Thus looking and breathing, with his body poised in easy, graceful attitude, as if so by nature born, in his leave-taking to me he raised his hand in slow and graceful manner, saying:

JOHN ST. HELEN.

“As I agree, I shall see you, and of my purpose and destiny speak—until then——”

The words “until then,” spoken with a soft voice and gentle tone, was a pleasant adieu, in fact, the entire sentence having been said, and I should say, dramatically acted in eloquence by word, motion of the body, jesticulation of the hand and utterance of the voice, not before or since equalled by any other person in my presence or experience. These expressions by word, voice and mannerism to me were food for thought, suggesting the inquiry from whence came such a man? Who can this handsome man, this violent man, this soft-mannered man, this eloquent man, be? Unsited to his vocation—the would-be merchant, in his log cabin store, and his life of seclusion in the wilds of the West. As in all things, came the day of final reckoning, and St. Helen walked into my office calling me to the private consultation room, turning and shutting the door, he said:

“I come redeeming my pledge, and have to say, first, that I desire to retain you as my attorney; that you may represent me in all matters of legal business concerning my affairs, and ask that you fix your reasonable retainer fee.”

This I did, and when satisfactorily arranged St. Helen resumed his statement by saying:

"Now, that I have employed you and paid your retainer fee, you, as my lawyer, will and must keep secret such matters as I shall confide in you touching my legal interest and personal safety, and the prevention of my prosecution by the courts for the matters we are now considering or that might hereafter arise in consequence of your present employment, conditioned, of course, upon my making good to you the promises I have made."

To which I replied: "Yes. I understand."

"Well, then," continued St. Helen. "I say to you, as my attorney, that my true name is not John St. Helen, as you know me and suppose me to be, and for this reason I cannot afford to go to Tyler before the Federal Court, in fear that my true identity be discovered, as the Federal courts are more or less presided over in the South and officered by persons heretofore, as well as now, connected with the Federal Army and government, and the risk would be too great for me to take, and you will now understand why I have retained you as my counsel, and as such I ask that you take your client, indicted in the Federal Court at Tyler, and get him clear of this charge, of which he is certainly not guilty, using your best judgment in his behalf and for my protection. For this service I will pay your fee and all costs incident to the trial and trip."

JOHN ST. HELEN.

Assenting to this, and accepting the suggestion as well as the employment of St. Helen, I set about fully planning the management of my client's case in the Federal Court with the purpose in view of a mutual protection of my client and John St. Helen. When after a few days of consultation and preparation my client and I were ready for the three or four days' drive by private conveyance from Grandberry to Tyler, St. Helen was notified and came promptly to my office the morning fixed for our leaving, and without further ceremony or discussion, handed me a large, long, red morocco pocketbook well filled with currency bills, saying that the amount it contained would be sufficient money for the trip, etc. The amount contained in this purse I never knew. Then, in complete readiness, my client and I, taking leave of our friends and thanking St. Helen, climbed into our buggy and were off for Tyler. After an uneventful trip we reached the hotel at Tyler on the afternoon of the third day out, to find the Federal Court in session, and after a night's rest I sought an interview with Col. Jack Evans, the then United States district attorney for the Eastern district of Texas, including Tyler, in Smith county. At this pleasant, courteous consultation an agreement was reached by which the government was to waive the presence of the defendant in court, who was yet

CHAPTER IV.

ST. HELEN'S ILLNESS

Idle hours in the life of a resident of a small country town hang heavily and we are wont to find entertainment. Under these conditions St. Helen was at all leisure times as welcome as he was congenial, so that when he was not at my office I would spend my leisure time at his place of business. And now I recall to mind one occasion when I, in company with a mutual friend, stepped into St. Helen's place of business. Just as we entered I noticed several cowboys, as they are called in Texas parlance, because they herd cattle, standing at the counter eating and drinking, being waited on by the colored porter. St. Helen meeting us, stopped, as we walked in, standing at the entrance from the front and resting his right arm on the counter, when one of the boys turned, addressing him in a very familiar manner, saying:

"John, when you die the cowboys will build a monument to your memory."

St. Helen cast a look of indignation to the party addressing him, his flashing black eyes giving full

ST. HELEN'S ILLNESS.

expression to his contempt for the proffered distinction of a monument by the cowboys. Then resting his thin, shapely right hand on the corner of the counter, standing in graceful poise, his head well poised, his beautiful black, curly hair flowing back from his high white forehead, holding his left hand well extended in gesticulation, said:

“Come not when I am dead
To shed thy tears around my head.
Let the wind sweep and the plover cry,
But thou, oh, fool man, go by.”

It was not so much what St. Helen said, but the manner of saying and acting it, and the voice by which it was said, that moved man to emotion, as would his recitation of almost any sentence that had in it a trace of sentiment.

The simple lines quoted will find but little lodgment in the soul of the casual reader, but when repeated by St. Helen, who could so beautifully portray each sentence in all of its meaning, it left its impress upon the memory of all who heard.

Five years after our acquaintance the hand of Time, with points of pain, began writing in deep lines on St. Helen's face the shadows of disease, the sign board on the pathway from the cradle to the

ST. HELEN'S ILLNESS.

grave. Emaciated, sick and weak, he took to his bed, confined in the back room of his store, where I and others, with the aid of a physician, gave him such attentions as his condition required. But despite our best efforts he continued to grow worse from day to day and both friends and physicians lost hope of his recovery. When I, tired and worn by my watch and continued attention at his bedside, sleeping and nursing in turn with others, was aroused about 10 o'clock one night and informed that I was wanted at the bedside of St. Helen, who was supposed to be in the last throes of death. On entering the room I found the physician holding St. Helen's wrist and counting his faint, infrequent pulse, which it seemed was beating his funeral dirge to the tomb. The doctor turned to me and said:

"St. Helen is dying and wishes to speak to you alone," and turning, withdrew from our presence.

I touched St. Helen, and after some effort aroused a faint response; he opened his eyes, which gave expression to that anxious and pleading look for help so often seen upon the face of a dying man when we are least powerful to assist. I requested to know of what service I could be to him. St. Helen, yet conscious, but so weak he could speak only in broken, whispered words, audible only by placing the ear close to his mouth, said:

ST. HELEN'S ILLNESS.

"I am dying. My name is John Wilkes Booth, and I am the assassin of President Lincoln. Get the picture of myself from under the pillow. I leave it with you for my future identification. Notify my brother Edwin Booth, of New York City."

He then closed his eyes in seeming rest. I reached forward and took from under the pillow a small picture taken of St. Helen a short while before his sickness, while on a visit to Glenrose Mills, by a photographer then tented at that place, as I was afterwards informed.

After getting the picture my attention was turned to giving St. Helen relief, if possible, not at the time thinking of his startling and important confession. I called the porter, and we began rubbing his entire body with strong brandy to give him vitality. He passed into a gentle sleep, and for a time we could not tell whether it would be the final sleep of death or a restful one, promising future consciousness and possible recovery. He lived through the night, much to our surprise and that of the doctor, who, after a careful examination of St. Helen's condition, was of the opinion that he was somewhat improved, but his condition continued extremely critical for several days, but the doctor finally announced that St. Helen's recovery was likely and in the course of a few days he was convalescent and by careful watch-



St. Helen Confessing the First Time to F. L. Bates That He
Is John Wilkes Booth.



EDWIN BOOTH,
At the Age of 31.

ST. HELEN'S ILLNESS.

ing he was brought to final recovery. But it was many weeks before his health was recovered. After which our relations became more intimate and confidential, for St. Helen was a man who cherished gratitude.

We were alone one day in my office. I remarked to St. Helen that he had passed through a very severe spell of sickness and, in fact, we all thought he could not recover. To which he assented with a look of serious concern, and fixing his eyes on my face, asked:

“Do you remember anything I said to you when I was sick?” and waited with an anxious look for reply.

I said to him that I remembered many things which he had said to me.

When St. Helen said:

“Then you have my life in your keeping, but, thank God, as my attorney.”

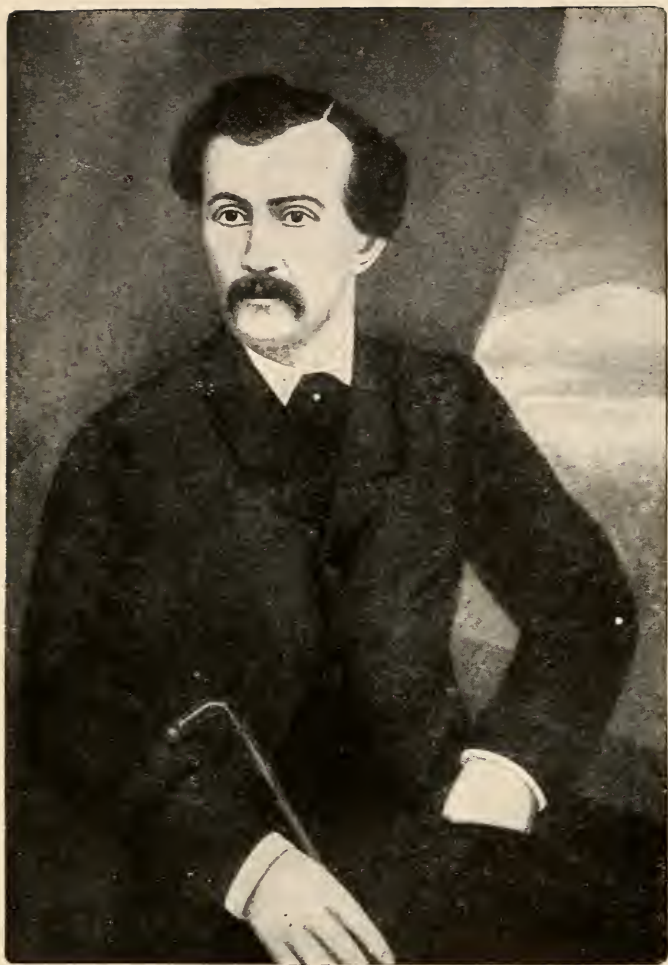
I replied: “Do you refer to what you said of your sweetheart and last love?”

St. Helen in reply said: “I have had a sweetheart, but no last love, and could not, in my wildest delirium have mentioned a subject so barren of concern

ST. HELEN'S ILLNESS.

to me. But your suggestion is a kind evasion of what I did say to you, which is of the greatest moment to me, and when I get well and feel like talking, and you like listening, I will tell you the story of my life and the history of the secrecy of my name."

"St. Helen, it will be interesting to me, at your convenience," I replied.



JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

Aged 27, Taken Just Before the Assassination of Lincoln,
and Cane Which Was Carried to Conceal Deformed Thumb.



Booth, Making a Full Confession of the Killing of Lincoln—
Accusing His Accomplices and Describing His Escape
to the Author.

CHAPTE V.

ST. HELEN'S IDENTITY REVEALED

After I had returned from an absence of several weeks, on professional business, St. Helen came to my office and invited me to walk with him to the open prairie. We went out about half a mile from town and seated ourselves on some rocks which had been placed in this open space under a large live oak tree as a physical monument of a land line or corner, a common custom at that time of marking located land lines. Seated upon this mounment we had an elevation comfortable and commanding the surrounding view. And St. Helen began his story by saying:

“I have told you that my name is not St. Helen, and, in fact, my name is John Wilkes Booth, a son of the late Junius Brutus Booth, Sr., the actor, and a brother of Junius Brutus Booth the second and Edwin Booth the actor.”

At that time I think he mentioned a Dr. Booth as his brother, and two sisters whose names I cannot now recall from his statements at that time. That he was born on a farm in the State of Maryland, not far from Baltimore. That there was a young mar-

ST. HELEN'S IDENTITY REVEALED.

the life of President Lincoln. First of all I want to say I had no personal feeling against President Lincoln. I am not at heart an assassin. I am not a physical coward, or a mean man at heart, which the word assassin implies, but what I did was done on my part with purely patriotic motives, believing, as I did, and as I was persuaded at that time, that the death of President Lincoln and the succession of Vice-President Johnson, a Southern man, to the presidency, was the then only hope for the protection of the South from misrule and the confiscation of the landed estates of the individual citizens of the Southern Confederate States, who were loyal to the South by President Lincoln as the chief executive of the United States and commander-in-chief of the Army; the success of the Federal forces and the downfall of the Confederacy having been assured by the surrender of Gen. Lee at Appomattox, on the 9th day of April, 1865, only five days before the final decision to take the life of President Lincoln. And I pause here to pay a tribute to the memory of Mrs. Surratt, for while she was hanged for her supposed connection with the conspiracy against the life of President Lincoln, she was innocent, and knew nothing whatever of the plot against the person to kidnap, or the final purpose to kill the President.

ST. HELEN'S IDENTITY REVEALED.

“It is true that I visited the home of Mrs. Surratt in Washington; it is true I stopped at the Surratt tavern, in Surrattville, not, however, because it was the property of Mrs. Surratt, or that Mrs. Surratt had anything to do with my being at the tavern, but because it was the best, and I believe, the only place for the traveling public to stop in the village of Surrattville. It is true that I was at the Surratt home in Washington, but my mission there was to see for the first time, by letter of introduction, given me by a mutual friend, John H. Surratt, a son of Mrs. Surratt, who was at the time in the secret service of the Southern Confederacy as a spy, plying in his service between Richmond, Virginia, Washington, D. C., New York City and Montreal, Canada, as well as other points, as I was then informed. And it was from John H. Surratt I desired to get information respecting what was then called the underground route, because of its hidden and isolated way, over which Surratt traveled through the Federal lines en route from Richmond, Virginia, to Washington, D. C., with the purpose of perfecting my plans for the kidnaping of President Lincoln. This occurred covering a time I should say from the spring to the late summer of 1864. Prior to this time I did not personally know, in fact, not even by sight, John H. Surratt, and was informed that my

CHAPTER VI.

THE ASSASSINATION

After a period of silence St. Helen began, with renewed interest and energy, telling me of the plot to kill President Lincoln, saying:

“On the morning of the day I killed the President the taking of the life of Mr. Lincoln had never entered my mind. My purpose had been, as I have stated, to kidnap President Lincoln for the purpose I have mentioned, and, in fact, one or more efforts to do so had fallen through, and we intended that the last effort should not fail. Preparatory to this end David E. Herold and I left Washington, D. C., by the way of Surrattville and along the underground route I have before described, for the purpose of perfecting plans for the kidnaping of the President. And after having passed over this line on horseback from Washington to near Richmond, Virginia, we returned, after making the necessary preparations for crossing the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers, over the same route, stopping the night of the 13th day of April, 1865, at the old Surratt tavern, at Surrattville, located about twelve miles to the southeast of Washington City. On the morning of the 14th day of April, 1865, we came into Washington and were stopped at the block house

THE ASSASSINATION.

of the Federal troops, at the bridge crossing the East Potomac river, by the Federal troops, on guard at this point. It appeared that some recent reports had been circulated that the life or safety of President Lincoln was impending, and that an attempt had or would be made from some source to assassinate the President, while at this time any such purpose was unknown to me, and because of these reports we were informed by the guard that no one could pass in or out of Washington City without giving a full account of himself, because of the threats against the life of the President. Herold and I hesitated to give our names for awhile, and were arrested and detained at this block house from about 11 o'clock in the morning until in the afternoon about 2 o'clock, when for the first time we heard definitely of Lee's surrender at Appomattox. We then realized that this was a death blow to the Southern Confederate States, when we made satisfactory explanation and were permitted to enter the city and went straight to the Kirkwood Hotel, the place of rendezvous of the conspirators against Mr. Lincoln, and where Andrew Johnson boarded. All the conspirators against President Lincoln met here with Andrew Johnson conversant of the purpose to kidnap the President. On arriving at the hotel, about 3 o'clock, I called on Vice-President

THE ASSASSINATION.

Johnson, when we talked over the situation and the changed conditions because of the surrender of Gen. Lee, and the Confederate forces at Appomattox, which had made the purpose of the kidnaping of President Lincoln and his delivery to the Confederate government at Richmond, to be held as a hostage of war, impossible, as the Confederate government had abandoned Richmond and the war between the States was considered practically over, which left, to my mind, nothing that we could do but accept defeat and leave the South, whom we had made our best efforts to serve, to her own fate, bitter and disappointing as it was. When Vice-President Johnson turned to me and said, in an excited voice and apparent anger:

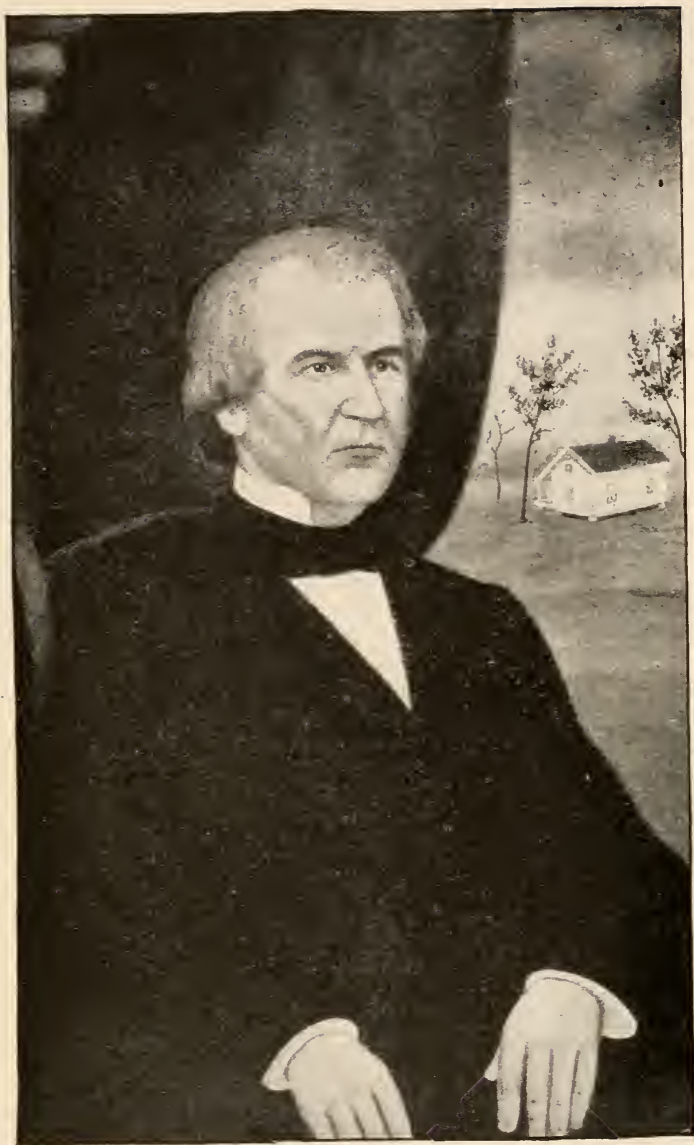
“ ‘Will you falter at this supreme moment?’ ”

“I could not understand his meaning, and stood silent, when with pale face, fixed eyes and quivering lips, Mr. Johnson asked of me:

“ ‘Are you too faint-hearted to kill him?’ ”

“As God is my judge, this was the first suggestion of the dastardly deed of the taking of the life of President Lincoln, and came as a shock to me. While for the moment I waited and then said:

“ ‘To kill the President is certain death to me,’ and I explained to Vice-President Johnson that I had just been arrested by the guard as I was com-



ANDREW JOHNSON.

Vice-President of the United States, and the Home Where
He Was Born, Near Raleigh, N. C.



JEFFERSON DAVIS.

President of the Confederate States of America During the
Late Civil War.

THE ASSASSINATION.

ing into the city over the East Potomac bridge that morning, and that it would be absolutely impossible for me to escape through the military line, should I do as he suggested, as this line of protection completely surrounded the city. Replying to this Mr. Johnson said:

“ ‘Gen. and Mrs. U. S. Grant are in the city, the guests of President Lincoln and family, and from the evening papers I have learned that President Lincoln and wife will entertain Gen. and Mrs. Grant at a box party to be given in their honor by the President and Mrs. Lincoln at Ford’s Theater this evening.’ ”

“ ‘At my suggestion Vice-President Johnson assured me that he would so arrange and see to it himself, that Gen. and Mrs. Grant would not attend the theater that evening with the President and his family, and would also arrange for my certain escape. I replied:

“ ‘Under these conditions and assurances I will dare strike the blow for the helpless, vanquished Southland, whose people I love.’ ”

“ ‘Mr. Johnson left the room and after a little more than an hour returned, saying that it had been arranged as he had promised, and that Gen. Grant had been, or would be suddenly called from the city, and that, therefore, he and his wife could not attend

THE ASSASSINATION.

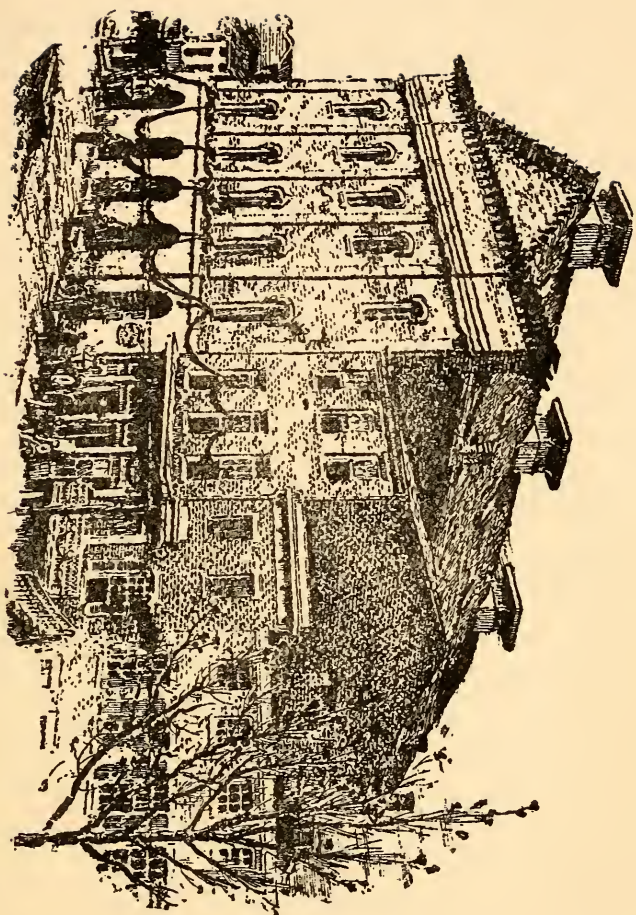
formed him of my readiness to carry out the promise I had made him. About 8:30 that evening we left his room, walked to the bar in the hotel and drank strong brandy in a silent toast to the success of the bloody deed. We walked from the bar-room to the street together, when I offered my hand as the last token of good-bye and loyalty to our purpose, and I shall not forget to my dying day the clasp of his cold, clammy hand when he said:

“ ‘Make as sure of your aim as I have done in arranging for your escape. For in your complete success lies our only hope.’

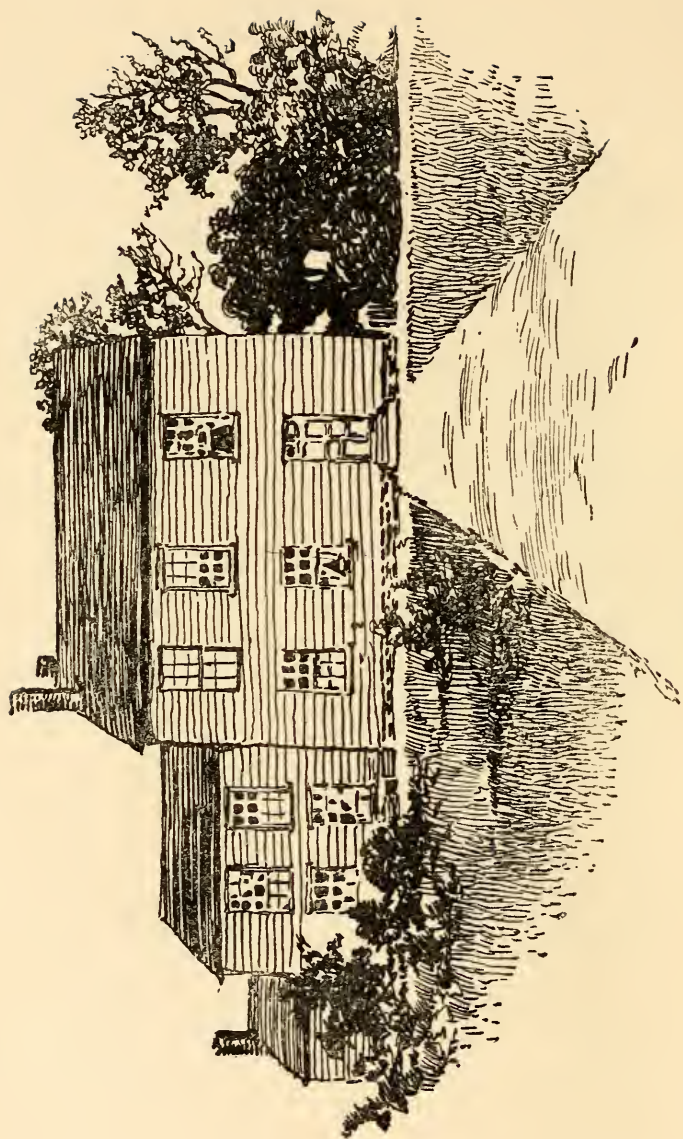
“ ‘I replied, ‘I will shoot him in the brain.’

“ ‘Then practically, from this time I am President of the United States,’ replied Vice-President Johnson, and he added, ‘good-bye.’

“ ‘I returned to the theater. I saw the President and party later take their seats in the box. I moved my position to a convenient space, and at the time when the way was clear and the play was well before the footlights I entered the President’s box, closed the door behind me and instantly placed my pistol so near it almost touched his head and fired the shot which killed President Lincoln and made Andrew Johnson President of the United States and myself an outcast, a wanderer, and gave me the name of an assassin. As I fired the same instant I leaped from



FORD'S THEATER.
The Scene of the Tragedy of the Assassination of President
Lincoln.



HOME OF DR. MUDD,
Where Booth and Herold Stayed All Night.



JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH, THE FIRST.
Father of John Wilkes Booth, as Sir Giles Overreach, Showing the Famous Actor in One of His Favorite Characters.



Booth Fleeing from Ford's Theatre After the Assassination.

THE ASSASSINATION.

the box to the stage, my right spur entangled in something in the drapery on the box, which caused me to miss my aim or location on the stage and threw my shin bone against the edge of the stage, which fractured my right shin bone about six or eight inches above the ankle. (At this point St. Helen, exposing his shin, called attention to what seemed to be a niched or uneven surface on the shin bone. This I did not notice closely, but casually it appeared to have been a wound or fracture.)

“From the stage I reached my horse in safety, which by arrangement was being held by David E. Herold, back of the theater and close to the door of the back entrance. With Herold’s assistance I mounted my horse and rode away with full speed without hindrance, and reached the bridge at the East Potomac river, crossing the same with my horse at full pace. When I came to the gate across the east end of the bridge there stood a Federal guard, who asked me a question easy to answer:

“ ‘Where are you going?’

“I replied, using the simple letters ‘T. B.’ as I had been instructed, and the guard then asked:

“ ‘Where?’

“I then replied, ‘T. B. Road,’ as I had been instructed by Mr. Johnson, and without further question the guard called for assistance to help raise

THE ASSASSINATION.

the gate quickly, when I at once again urged my horse to full speed and went on to Surrattville, where I waited for Herold to overtake me, as prearranged, whom I expected to follow closely behind. After waiting a few minutes Herold came up and we rode the remainder of the night until about 4 o'clock on the morning of the 15th of April, 1865, when we reached the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd, where Dr. Mudd, by cutting a slit in it, removed my riding boot from the injured right foot and leg and proceeded to dress it by bandaging it with strips of cloth and pieces of cigar boxes, and the riding boot was left at the home of Dr. Mudd, where we remained during the rest of the day, and at nightfall proceeded on our journey, my bootless right foot being covered only by the sock and the leg as bandaged and splinted by Dr. Mudd.

“From the home of Dr. Mudd I went to the home of a Southern sympathizer by the name of Cox, which we reached between 4 and 5 o'clock on the morning of the 16th day of April, 1865. Mr. Cox refused to admit us into his house, the news of the death of President Lincoln having preceded us, and he feared for this reason to take Herold and I in. But he called his overseer, or manager about the place, and instructed him to hide us in a pine thicket on or near the banks of the Potomac river, just back

THE ASSASSINATION.

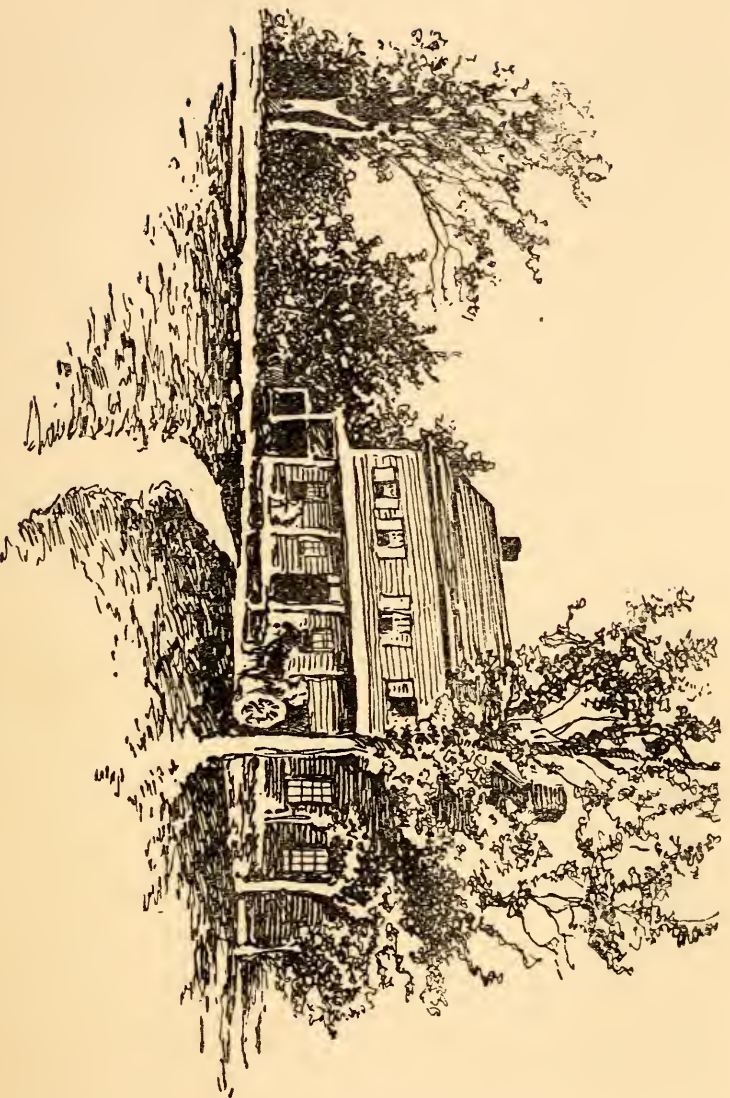
of and near his plantation. This man, the overseer, was of medium size, approximately my weight, but not quite so tall, I should say, swarthy complexioned, black hair and eyes, with a short growth of whiskers over his face. I called him by that familiar cognomen known to the Confederate soldiers, 'Johnny.' I have the impression, whether correct or not I cannot say, from having heard his name called by a Mr. Jones, a relative of Mr. Cox, that it was Ruddy or Roby, but heard this only a few times. Of course, this may have been a given name, nickname or surname, I don't know how this was; I was not specially interested in knowing his name and was with him but a short while, having negotiated with him to put us across the country and into the care and protection of the Confederate soldiers.

"Ruddy told me (if this be his name) that some of Col. Mosby's command of Confederate troops was then encamped not far south of the Rappahannock river at or near Bowling Green, Virginia, and agreed to convey and deliver us to these Confederate troops for a price, as I now best remember, about three hundred dollars. Ruddy, as we will call him, left us in our hiding place until he could go to Bowling Green, some thirty-five miles or more distant, with a view of arranging with some of these soldiers to meet us at a fixed time and place—pro-

THE ASSASSINATION.

posedly on the Rappahannock river, which was then about the dividing line between the contending Federal and Confederate armies.

“Ruddy left and did not return for several days, from say the 16th or 17th to the 21st of April, 1865. Herold and I were cared for during his absence by Mr. Jones, the relative, I think, half brother of Mr. Cox. On Ruddy's return he reported that the desired arrangements had been made with Capt. Jett and others of Mosby's command, then stationed at Bowling Green, Virginia, south of the Rappahannock river, to meet us at the ferry on the Rappahannock river at Ports Conway and Royal, as early as 2 o'clock P. M. of April 22, 1865. So we immediately started for this point on the night of the 21st of April, crossed the Potomac river, reaching the south side of the Potomac river we then had about eighteen miles to go from the Potomac to the Rappahannock river to the point agreed upon. This distance was through an open country, and we were liable to be come upon at any moment by the Federal troops; so to guard against this I arranged the plan of my flight, covering this distance from the Potomac to the Rappahannock to be the scene of an old negro moving. An old negro near the summer home of Dr. Stewart possessed of two impoverished horses and a dilapidated wagon was hired for the trip.



THE SUMMER HOME OF DR. STEWART.
Near Where Was Obtained the Old Negro and His Wagon to
Haul Booth to the Rappahannock River.

THE ASSASSINATION.

company with Capt. Jett, on foot, by a near way, for the purpose of getting me a shoe for my lame foot and such other things as Herold and I needed and that could not be obtained at Ports Conway and Royal, and they were to return and meet me the next day at the Garrett home, where Ruddy would deliver to me the papers mentioned, if recovered.

“The Garrett home, I should say, is about three miles north of the public road crossing the Rappahannock river at Ports Conway and Royal and leading in a southerly direction to Bowling Green, Virginia. From the ferry we went out the Bowling Green road a short distance westerly; we then turned and rode north on a country or bridle road for a distance of about three miles and a half, when we reached the Garrett home, where Lieuts. Bainbridge and Ruggles left me, but were to keep watch in the distance over me until Ruddy and Herold returned, which they were expected to do the following day, it being some twelve or fifteen miles walk for them. They were to remain there (at Bowling Green) over night of the day they left me and return the following day.

“About one or two o’clock in the afternoon of April the 23d, 1865, the second day of my stay at the Garrett home, I was out in the front yard, lounging on the meadow, when Lieuts. Bainbridge and

THE ASSASSINATION.

Ruggles came up hurriedly and notified me that a squad of Yankee troops had crossed the Rappahannock river in hot pursuit of me, and advised me to leave at once and go back into the woods north of the Garrett house, in a wooded ravine, which they pointed out, giving me a signal whistle by which I would know them, and hurriedly rode off, saying that they would return for me in about an hour at the place designated, and bring with them a horse for my escape.

“I left immediately, without letting anyone know that I had gone or the direction I had taken. I reached the woods at about the place which had been pointed out to me, as nearly as one could traveling in a strange wooded section with the impediment of a lame leg. At about the time fixed I was delighted to hear the signal, and answered, to the best of my recollection, about three or four o'clock P. M. My friends came up with an extra horse, which I mounted, and we rode away in a westerly direction, riding the remainder of the afternoon and the following night until about twelve o'clock, when we camped together in the woods, or rather dismounted to rest ourselves and horses until daylight. We talked over the situation, they giving me directions by which I should travel. When we at last separated in a country road, they said about twenty or

THE ASSASSINATION.

the road and remained there all night. The next morning I obtained breakfast for myself and feed for my horse from an elderly gentleman and lady at a little country home at an early hour without further incident and interest, save and except the enjoyment of the meal, when I turned my course to the southwest, as I had been directed, and followed this direction day after day, impersonating the character of a Confederate soldier. Continuing on down through West Virginia, I crossed the Big Sandy river at Warfield, in Eastern Kentucky, and after traveling from Warfield for about two days, and covering a distance of fifty or sixty miles in a southwesterly direction from Warfield, I, as well as my horse, was about worn out, and I was therefore compelled to rest for about a week, claiming to be a wounded Confederate soldier. The parties with whom I stopped was a widow lady and her young son, whose name I can not now remember. But after receiving their kind attentions and needed rest, I resumed my journey with the purpose of traveling to the south until I could reach the Mississippi river at a safe point for crossing it, and find my way into the Indian Territory as the best possible hiding place, in my opinion.

"I finally reached without incident worthy of mention the Mississippi river and crossed the same



Booth, Disguised as a Confederate Soldier in His Flight,
Applies for Shelter and Hospitality for His Tired Horse
and Himself.



Booth (as Jesse Smith) Disguised as a Teamster on His Way
to San Francisco to Meet His Mother and Brother.

THE ASSASSINATION.

at what was called Catfish Point, in the State of Mississippi. This point is a short distance south of where the Arkansas river empties into the Mississippi river. I followed the south and west bank of the Arkansas river until I reached the Indian Territory, where I remained at different places, hiding among the Indians for about eighteen months, when I left the Indian Territory and went to Nebraska and was at Nebraska City employed by a white man to drive a team connected with a wagon train going from Nebraska City, Nebraska, to Salt Lake City, Utah. This man was hauling provisions for the United States government to the Federal troops encamped at Salt Lake City. But I left this wagon train while en route, just before we got to Salt Lake City, and proceeded to San Francisco, California, to meet my mother and my brother, Junius Brutus Booth. After meeting my mother and brother and remaining a while there, I left and went into Mexico. From there I went up through Texas, finally stopping at Glenrose Mills and Grandberry, Texas, where we are now.

"Of course, I could add many matters of interest to what I have said to you, but I have told you quite sufficient for the present," saying which he gave me a look of inquiry as much as to say, "Well, what do you thing of me now?"

CHAPTER VII.

THE MAN KILLED AT THE GARRETT HOME

As we were returning to town I continued the subject of our conversation by saying to St. Helen that I had little knowledge of the history of the matters about which he had spoken so in detail, but as of general information knew that John Wilkes Booth had assassinated President Lincoln, though had no accurate knowledge of the facts as detailed by him of the President's assassination, such as would enable me to reach the conclusion, as to the correctness or incorrectness of his statement, for I having been a small boy at the close of the Civil War had not had the opportunity to know much of the history of the war, and less of the facts touching the tragic death of President Lincoln, and therefore was left alone to judge of the truth of what he said by the impressions and convictions that his mere relation of it created on my mind. The truth being that I did not believe his story and sought the first opportunity to close an interview as abhorrent as it was disbelievable by

THE MAN KILLED AT THE GARRETT HOME.

me. And out of charity I had begun to regard St. Helen as an insane man, bordering in fact upon violent madness, but I said to him:

“I have learned to know and like you as John St. Helen, but I would not know how to regard you and associate with you as John Wilkes Booth, the assassin, and to be kind and generous to you as my friend, I must say I do not believe your story. First because, I like St. Helen, and in the second place is it not true that John Wilkes Booth was killed soon after the assassination of President Lincoln, such as has been the general information heretofore practically unquestioned? No, St. Helen, not against my will and in face of these facts can I believe you the assassin and criminal you claim to be. And giving you the benefit of the doubt of your sanity I must decline to accept your story as true. It is possible you may have known Booth and the secrets of his crime and escape, and it is possible that from your brooding over this subject your mind has become shaken and you imagine yourself Booth. To me you are my friend John St. Helen—not the wicked and arch-criminal, the assassin, John Wilkes Booth. It would take even more than your sane statement to make me believe that you are any other than John St. Helen. I can’t believe that one of your humane instincts, possessed, as I think I know you to be, of all the attributes of gentle breeding and

THE MAN KILLED AT THE GARRETT HOME.

culture, with the highest order of intellect and refinement blended with beautiful sentiment, and possessed of a soul unalloyed with crime, can be John Wilkes Booth. Could a man seemingly possessed of such attributes, protected by a strong manhood, without physical or mental fear, without an apparent taint of the composition of cowardice, play the part of an assassin? Booth may have been possessed of all the qualities that it takes to make up the assassin, but St. Helen? In my opinion, no, if I mistake not your character. You would have met the man you sought to slay to the forefront and bid him with equal chance defend the life you would take.

“Then, too, did not the government of the United States announce to the American people, and as for that matter, to the civilized world, that Booth was killed and the death of President Lincoln avenged? Then do you say it is a fact that Booth was not killed at the Garrett barn in Virginia? It is a physical fact that some man was killed at the Garrett home. If not Booth who was this man?”

St. Helen replied by saying, “As you have heard that a man was killed at the Garrett barn, and without positive or direct proof as to who this man was, yet from the circumstances I would say that it was Ruddy, the man with whom I had negotiated for my personal

THE MAN KILLED AT THE GARRETT HOME.

deliverance, together with that of my accomplice, David E. Herold, to the Confederate soldiers. You will remember I paid this man with a check made payable to my order by a Canadian bank, and if he did, as I requested, which he promised to do and left me to do, he got my letters, pictures, etcetera, out of the wagon, as I have explained to you, as he was to bring them to me at the Garrett home on the day or night following the day that I left the Garrett home, as I have also explained to you. I take it, without personal knowledge of the facts, that Ruddy and Herold came to the Garrett home, as prearranged and promised when we separated at the ferry on the Rapahannock river, so that the Federal troops, by some means, traced me to the Garrett home, where they found Herold and Ruddy, killing Ruddy and capturing Herold. They found on the body of Ruddy the check for sixty pounds, together with my letters, and I think a picture, and by reason of finding these belongings of mine on the body of Ruddy, I presume they identified it as the body of myself. By this misleading incident, for I take it to be true that these documents unexplained found upon the body of anyone, and surely by those who did not know me, would reasonably and rightfully justify the conclusion that they had the body of John Wilkes Booth, but they were in fact mistaken. And I do not for one moment

THE MAN KILLED AT THE GARRETT HOME.

hours of our darkness beyond the sunlights of today, and through the shadowed valley to the great beyond where God rules and Justice obtains throughout the time of all eternity.

“After all, be it so. Having made known to you my true identity and the cause of my crime, although I know that you by your actions condemn me in fact, I would think less of you if you did not, for I myself confess, and would the power I had to condemn that which you condemn, conscious that the Arbiter of our being is pitiless in accusation, ever present in persecution and tireless in punishment. Yes, I walk in the companionship of crime, sleep within the folds of sin and dream the dreams of the damned and awake to go forth by all men accused as well as self-condemned. Ah, weary, weary! Shall I say that I would that I were dead? Yes, that I could on the wings of the wind, by a starless and moonless night, be gone in flight to the land of perpetual silence, where I could forget and be forgotten, and whisper to my weary soul, ‘Peace, be still.’ But for me, except in death, there is no rest, for God in the dispensation of His justice ordains that the criminal shall suffer the pangs of his own crime. Why, then, should I hope? But hopeless I may turn when all nature is hushed and hear the voice of the supernatural saying:

THE MAN KILLED AT THE GARRETT HOME.

true, it in no way identifies you as John Wilkes Booth. Your story could be as well told by any one else of your genius for some purpose hidden from me, so I must continue to know you as John St. Helen."

St. Helen replied, "Then allow me to say that your long and persistent reasoning that I am not John Wilkes Booth almost persuades me that I am in fact John St. Helen. Indeed, I am quite willing that you shall believe I am not John Wilkes Booth. However, I realize that you have one proof of my identity—my tintype picture. I ask that you will keep that picture, which may be the means of my complete identification to you some day, when you will better understand that my confidence in you has been prompted by selfish motives to a certain degree. While your continued mistrust and disbelief is comforting to me, in that I reflect that you, after all that I have told you, for the reasons that you have given, are not willing to believe me the criminal that I am; or, if this disbelief arises from your thinking me incapable of the crime to which I plead guilty, it is surely gratifying. But, if on the other hand, your mistrust arises from your opinion that I am unworthy of belief under any and all circumstances, my purposes are thwarted and my efforts of no avail. But remember always that I am grateful to you for what you have done for me, and the burden you share with me, un-

THE MAN KILLED AT THE GARRETT HOME.

wittingly, whether it be with St. Helen or with Booth, and in the future as in the past, with your permission, we will be friends. Think of me as you will, my true name and identity you have. My correct personality you know, and whether we long associate together or soon separate, remember you are the one man—the only living man with whom I leave the true story of the tragedy which ended the life of President Lincoln.”

Closing with this statement, St. Helen left me in an uncertain frame of mind. The future standing as a barrier against coming events I was not prepared at that time to admit that St. Helen was Booth. I was unwilling to assume the responsibility of believing that St. Helen was Booth. Aside from my better judgment was my strong faith in the accuracy of the claims of my government that John Wilkes Booth, the assassin, had been killed, and I did not care to acquire the unpleasant notoriety and criticism of making the announcement that John Wilkes Booth in fact lived, unless the proof of such a fact was established irrefutably. So, I determined to drop the subject for all time to come—treating it as a myth unfounded in fact—a story that existed only in the mind of St. Helen, a comparatively demented man, a crank, who gloried in deceiving me to the idea. I preferred to accept the story of the event referred to as it is told

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEPARATION

St. Helen had grown tired of his class of business. In fact, he paid little attention to it, letting it drift with the tide of business affairs in the little town of Grandberry. Now his mind turned to thoughts of mining and the acquisition of wealth by the development of mining properties in Colorado. I was looking to other fields for my efforts and decided to leave Texas.

When the final hour of our separation came I returned to the States, as we Westerners termed the older States in the Union, and St. Helen left for Leadville, Colorado, in the spring of 1878, from which point I lost trace of him until some time in the year 1898. In the meantime I had located in the city of Memphis, Tennessee, and St. Helen and I were far apart—lost to each other and comparatively forgotten for a period of twenty years.

During this interval of time, my location being more convenient to books and the acquiring of information, I investigated the subject of the assassination of President Lincoln and its attendant cir-

THE SEPARATION.

cumstances in view of the statements made by St. Helen. He had connected Andrew Johnson with the plot to kidnap and assassinate President Lincoln and investigation became interesting to learn, if possible, the relations, personal and otherwise, existing between President Lincoln and Vice-President Andrew Johnson.

In this search I find that the oath of office as President of the United States was administered to Andrew Johnson by Chief Justice Chase in the lodgings of Andrew Johnson, at the Kirkwood Hotel, Washington, D. C., and that besides members of the Cabinet a number of United States Senators were called in to witness the ceremony. At this hour but few of the citizens of Washington knew that President Lincoln was dead. The inauguration occurred at 10 o'clock on the morning of April 15, 1865, President Lincoln having died at twenty-two minutes past 7 o'clock on the same morning.

At his informal inauguration President Johnson made a speech remarkable in that he made no mention of President Lincoln. I give this speech in part with the comments thereon by those present, who say:

"The effect produced upon the public by this speech, which might be regarded as an inaugural address, was not happy. Besides its evasive charac-

THE SEPARATION.

ter respecting public policies, which every observant man noted, with apprehension, an unpleasant impression was created by its evasive character respecting Mr. Lincoln. The entire absence of eulogy of the slain President was remarked. There was no mention of his name or of his character, or of his office, the only allusion in any way whatever to Mr. Lincoln was Mr. Johnson's declaration that he 'was almost overwhelmed by the announcement of the sad event which has so recently occurred.'

"While he found no time to praise one whose praises was on every tongue, he made ample reference to himself and his own past history, and though speaking not more than five minutes, it was noticed that 'I' and 'my' and 'me' were used at least a score of times. A boundless egotism was inferred from the line of his remarks, 'My past public life, which has been long and laborious, has been founded, as I in good conscience believe, upon the great principle of right which lies at the base of all things.'

" 'I must be permitted to say, if I understand the feelings of my own heart, I have long labored to ameliorate and alleviate the conditions of the great mass of the American people.

" 'Toil and an honest advocacy of the great principles of free government have been my lot. The duties have been mine, the consequence God's.' "

THE SEPARATION.

“My husband placed great confidence in my knowledge of human nature, and it was his intention to remove Seward as soon as peace was made in the South. He greatly disliked Andrew Johnson. On one occasion we noticed him following us and it displeased Mr. Lincoln so much that he turned and asked in a loud voice, ‘Why is this man,’ meaning Andrew Johnson, ‘forever following me?’ ”

Thus we have conduct suspicious in its nature of Andrew Johnson toward Mr. Lincoln. And the world will ask of all mankind the same question Mr. Lincoln asked of his wife. And why was it that Andrew Johnson should have followed Mr. Lincoln? Does St. Helen’s story explain Johnson’s conduct—Johnson’s motives?

In this connection it is interesting to know how Lincoln passed the last day of his life. Mrs. Lincoln says:

“He spent the last day of his life, the 14th day of April, 1865, by taking an early breakfast and attending a Cabinet meeting at 11 o’clock, at which Gen. Grant was present. He spent the afternoon with Gov. Oglesby, Senator Jones and other friends from Illinois.”

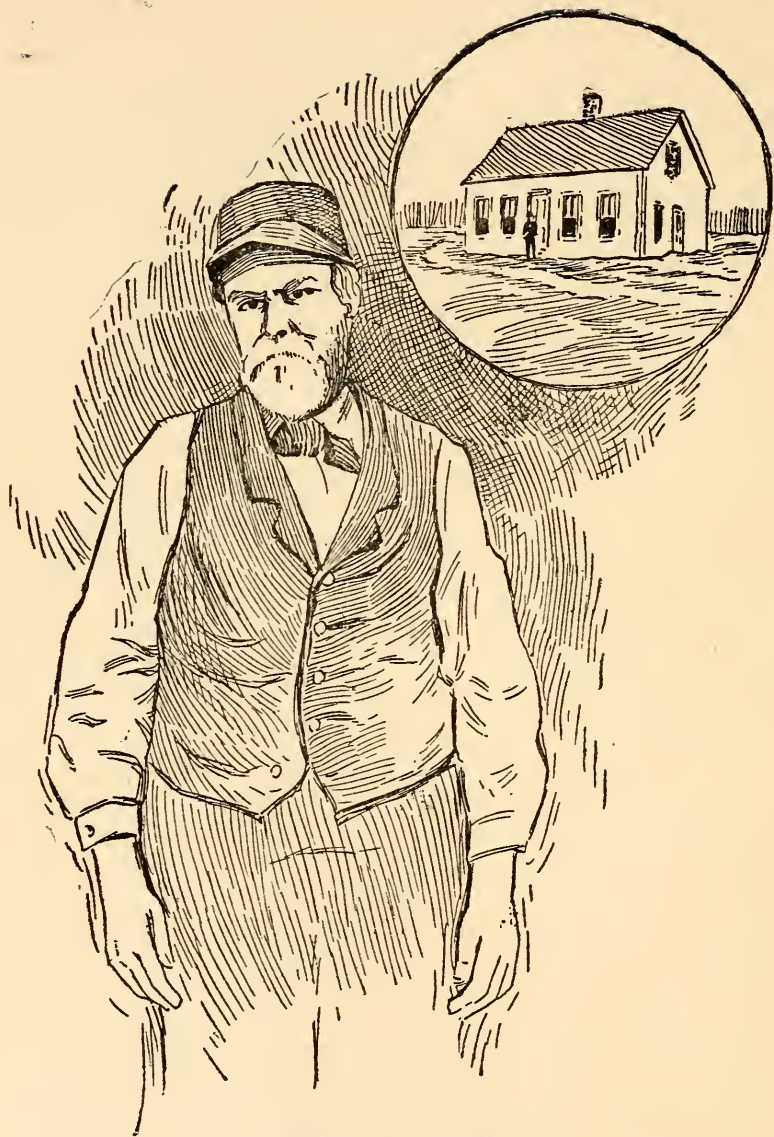
On the afternoon of this day, in conversation with Mr. Colfax, only a short time before they should go to the theater, Mr. Lincoln invited Mr. Colfax to

THE SEPARATION.

attend the theater with him, saying that he had secured a box at Ford's Theater for the purpose of entertaining Gen. Grant, but that Gen. Grant had just declined the invitation and had left the city, and that he (Lincoln) did not want the people entirely disappointed in their expectation of seeing both himself and Gen. Grant at the theater that evening, and would be glad to have Mr. Colfax accompany him, taking Gen. Grant's place. This Colfax declined.

It has always been an interesting question to me why, and how, under what conditions could Gen. Grant have been so successfully decoyed away from the City of Washington on so important an occasion, almost at the hour of attending this theater party in company with President Lincoln as the great Federal heroes of the civil war?

Gen. Grant, in explanation of the occurrence, says that late on the afternoon in question he received a note from his wife expressing some frivolous reasons as to why they should leave the city at once and visit their daughter, I believe, in Dubuque, Iowa. He says that on reaching Philadelphia he heard of the assassination of President Lincoln and returned at once by special train to Washington. These facts of history I likewise present to the public mind without comment. I trust, however, that I may be par-



GEN. D. D. DANA.

Under Orders of Gen. C. C. Augur, Connected With the
Army at Washington. The Pursuer of John Wilkes Booth.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH

In the month of December, 1897, by some agency unknown to me, I found a copy of the Sunday edition of the Boston Globe, dated December 12, 1897, in the reception hall of my home. How this paper came to be in my home is unknown to me. I did not take it by subscription, nor have I or any member of my family ever, before or since, purchased a copy of the Boston Globe, nor has a copy of this paper at any other time been in my office or home. How this special paper came to my home is a complete mystery to myself and to every member of my household. My purpose is not to convey the idea that the presence of the Boston Globe was an intrusion in my home, for the contrary is true, because it was appreciated and read with great interest, and I regard it as worth many times its price as an entertainer for any household. I take pardonable pride in the State of Massachusetts and its people, for this State has been the home of my ancestors and kinsmen since the year 1635.

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH.

The point is, by what mysterious means did this Sunday edition of the Boston Globe, containing the first published statement of Gen. D. D. Dana, of Lubec, Maine, giving a full account of his knowledge respecting the assassination of President Lincoln, and a detailed statement of his pursuit of John Wilkes Booth, twenty-three years after I had heard the story of John St. Helen, who claimed to be John Wilkes Booth. To my surprise the story of Gen. Dana corroborated in its minutest detail the story St. Helen told to me in his confession recounting Booth's escape from Washington, D. C., to the Garrett home, in Virginia.

David D. Dana, brother of Charles A. Dana, the founder, owner and publisher of the New York Sun, in December, 1897, lived in a small, one-story frame house in West Lubec, Maine. This being the ancestral home of his wife's people, where he settled some twenty years prior to December, 1897, at the time when the opening of lead mines in this section promised to make Lubec famous the world over, and after years of mining with indifferent success, Gen. Dana settled down to the quiet life of the farmer with his wife and many pets as companions, being eight miles from the nearest village. But he

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH.

was by no means a recluse, being well informed on all current events, and a constant reader of the newspapers and periodicals of the day.

Gen. Dana's story is given in full below :

“The Boston Sunday Globe, Dec. 12, 1897.

“HE ALMOST SAVED LINCOLN.

“David Dana, Brother of Chas. A. Dana, Tried to Prevent
the Assassination of the Martyr President—Now
a Dweller in Lubec, Maine—He Tells
of His Pursuit of Booth.

“Away down in a remote corner of New England, in the most easterly town in this broad country, dwells the man who alone had knowledge beforehand of the meditated assassination of Lincoln, and who tried by every means in his power to thwart the conspiracy, but all in vain.

“This man, David Dana, brother of the late Chas. A. Dana, is a most unique and interesting character, and one who has seen his full share of life, and has been a part of the most stirring events in our coun-

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH.

Meigs on the left to Geisboro point on the right, with orders to permit none to enter the city of Washington during the day unless they could give their names, where they were from, and what was their business at the capitol.

“ ‘From sundown to sunrise no one was to enter or leave the city except in case of sickness or death. All suspicious persons were arrested and sent to the commanding general for examinati

“ ‘On Friday, April 14, 1865, two men appeared before the guard on the road leading into Washington from the east. Refusing to give their names or state their business, they were arrested and put in the guard tent, whence they were to be sent to headquarters. This was about 1 o'clock in the afternoon. In an hour or two they gave their names as Booth and Herold.

“ ‘The officers on guard under me carried out my orders so strictly that it was very annoying to the rebel sympathizers who wished access to the city, so that many complaints were made by prominent citizens of Maryland.

“ ‘About 4 p.m. I received an order from Gen. Augur to release all prisoners held by the guards and to withdraw the guard until further orders. I sent an orderly to the officers on the line from Fort Meigs easterly, with orders to release all prisoners and

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH.

to report to me at Fort Baker. On the line from Fort Meigs to Surrattville I went in person and withdrew the guard to my headquarters.

“ ‘Booth and Herold were released as soon as the orders reached the guard, and they proceeded at once to Washington, reaching there about 6:30 in the afternoon. I had a guard at each end of the bridge on the eastern branch of the Potomac and one of the guards knew Booth and recognized him as he rode into the city and as he came out after the assassination, and had it been known that he had killed Lincoln escape would have been impossible.

“ ‘I returned to headquarters about 11 p. m. and had dismissed the guard and was eating supper, when an officer rode into camp with the startling intelligence that Lincoln was killed and that the murderer, with another man, had ridden at a rapid pace into the country.

“ ‘I called out the guard and sent detachments in different directions and then went to the bridge to learn what I could there. On my way I met a company of cavalry, the 13th New York, which I ordered to patrol the river to Guisi Point and learn all they could and then return to Fort Baker.

“ ‘At the bridge I found an orderly from Gen. Augur with orders for me to report to him at Washington without delay. I did so, and was ushered

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH.

into his presence, where I found him standing by his desk with streaming eyes.

“ ‘My God, marshal,’ he cried, upon seeing me, ‘if I had listened to your advice this terrible thing never would have happened!’

“ ‘After conversing with him for a few moments I was appointed adjutant general on his staff and ordered to use my own judgment as to the best way of capturing Booth. The order read as follows:

“ ‘To Commanders of all Divisions, Brigades, Regiments, Companies, and Posts: You will obey all orders emanating from Adj. Gen. and Provost Marshall D. D. Dana the same as though especially issued from these headquarters.

(Signed) Maj. Gen. C. C. Augur,
Commanding 22d Corps in Dept. of Washington.’

“ ‘While with Gen. Augur and by his request I laid out the plan for the capture of Booth. First, one of the swiftest steamers which could be obtained should patrol the Potomac as far as the Patuxent river and seize all boats which could not give a good account of themselves. Then a steamer should be sent up the Patuxent and all boats on this river were to be seized at all hazards to as far as Horse Head ferry.

“ ‘These orders were telegraphed to the boats on the Patuxent and were carried out to the letter. The

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH.

already committed and the assassin had escaped the confines of the military powers of Washington.

Gen. Dana, on reaching the headquarters of Gen. Augur, found him in tears and his first words were: "My God, marshal, if I had listened to your advice this terrible thing would never have happened."

I ask, and the civilized world listens for the reply—What had Gen. Dana advised Gen. Augur touching the safety of the President, and "this terrible thing," as he calls it, prior to the assassination, which, in Gen. Augur's opinion, if heeded, would have prevented the killing of President Lincoln? Is this a self-accusation—an unwitting admission of his responsibility for the death of President Lincoln? This expression of self-accusation, taken in connection with Gen. Augur's surprising and unexplained order, issued about four o'clock on April 14th, 1865, in face of the known and impending danger to the life of President Lincoln, is startling. The withdrawing of the guard from the protection of the President on the late afternoon of the evening of his assassination has never been explained. And the bloody deed was accomplished in less than six hours after the order of withdrawal was issued, and before the ink was well dry on the record which changed the policy of the government for the protection of the life of the President, long guarded by

THE PURSUIT OF BOOTH.

a well-maintained standing army at Washington, and made possible the escape of the assassin. Without reason, without explanation and without request, and without suggestion even, of the President, or any other person in authority in the army superior in command to Gen. C. C. Augur, this important move was made, changing the fixed plans and tearing down the barriers of protection so long deemed necessary by the government as a wise and prudential policy, upon the authority and orders only of Gen. C. C. Augur, so far as we are informed by Gen. Dana.

In the light of events following this mysterious order, we ask, to what conduct of his or advice of Gen. Dana could Major Gen. C. C. Augur refer as his failure to listen to Gen. Dana? Could it have been that Dana had advised the holding of Booth and Herold while they were yet prisoners at the block house, at the East Potomac bridge? Or had he, against the advice or knowledge of Gen. Dana, entered into the plans of conspiracy against the life of President Lincoln?

One would infer from the statements imputed to him by Gen. Dana that Major Gen. Augur had had it in his power, and was so advised by Gen. Dana, to save the life of the President and had failed to do so and that, too, against the admonitions of Gen.



GEN. C. C. AUGUR.

Commander of the Army Stationed Around Washington for Protection of the Life of Lincoln, and the Home of the Government, Who Issued the Order Calling in the Guards.



MRS. SURRATT

And Her Boarding-house in Washington City, Where Booth
Met Her Son, John H. Surratt, Delivering the Letter From
David E. Herold, Their Mutual Friend.

CHAPTER X.

THE EAST POTOMAC BRIDGE

Gen. Dana says, in speaking of the pursuit of Booth and Herold: "Booth and Herold remained a day and one night at the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd." St. Helen (or Booth) told me they reached the home of Dr. Mudd just before daylight on the morning of April 15th, 1865, the morning after the assassination, where his riding boot was cut off by Dr. Mudd and his sprained ankle and fractured shin bone dressed and splintered by the doctor with parts of a cigar box, and the old doctor made him a rough crutch out of a broom handle; when after an early breakfast, their horses in the brush near by, having finished feeding, they, thanking and paying Dr. Mudd for his services, mounted their horses and left, riding the most direct way they could, keeping well in the country and by-roads, to the home of Mr. Cox, during the 15th day of April, 1865, the day after the killing of President Lincoln, showing substantial corroboration of Gen. Dana so far.

Gen. Dana says Booth and Herold killed their horses while they were in hiding back of the Cox plantation on the Potomac river, but Booth says the

THE EAST POTOMAC BRIDGE.

Federal government and the life of President Lincoln, Booth trusted him; and it will be remembered that it was Herold who gave Booth the letter of introduction to John H. Surratt.

Mrs. Surratt, the most prominent of the persons suspected of complicity in Booth's crime, was innocent of any complicity whatever in the matter; was a woman of middle age at the time of her execution, rather good-looking, and the mother of two or more children, among them John H. Surratt and a daughter. Mrs. Surratt was at one time comfortably well off but had been reduced to the necessity of removing from Surrattville, her home, to Washington, where she kept a boarding house on H street. I am informed that Mrs. Surratt is the only woman ever hanged by a judgment of a Federal Adjudication.

Recurring to the incident at the East Potomac bridge and the statements made by Demond to Gen. Dana, where he says, "I well remember when you came down to meet some one that was waiting on the Washington side, but never knew who it was until I read the account given by you in The Sunday Globe."

Is this statement suggestive? Gen. Dana fails to mention that he had a meeting with some third party

THE EAST POTOMAC BRIDGE.

they left after Booth and Herold had crossed the bridge.

Gen. Dana shows that when he arrived at the headquarters of Major Gen. Augur that Gen. Augur gave Dana complete command of all the forces to pursue and capture Booth. And we ask, is it not a significant fact that Gen. Dana should have misdirected all the troops which he sent out other than a single detachment, in pursuit of Booth, unless he knew the direction Booth had gone? Is it not strange that he himself, with a detail of men, without hesitation and without other information than such as he possessed before the shooting of President Lincoln—in fact, as if by intuition, took the proper trail by leaving Washington directly for Surrattville, crossing the East Potomac bridge as Booth and Herold had done, following along the trail in the wake of Booth and Herold, who arrived at the home of Dr. Mudd about four o'clock a. m., while Gen. Dana turned from the road leading to Dr. Mudd's home and went to Bryantown, just three and a half miles from Dr. Mudd's home, reaching Bryantown at six o'clock a. m., while Booth and Herold were yet at the home of the doctor. Dr. Mudd administered to Booth's pains, then went to Bryantown, where he called on Gen. Dana, and was permitted to leave Bryantown by Gen. Dana, as the general says, "at

THE EAST POTOMAC BRIDGE.

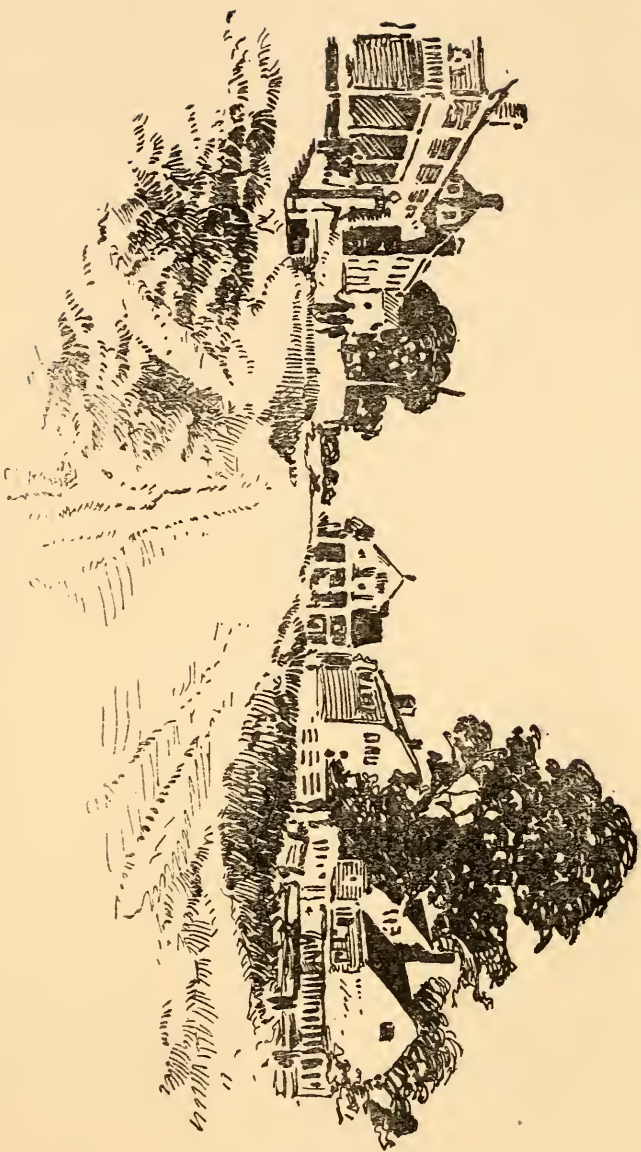
the request of his cousin, Dr. George Mudd.’

We ask, are these findings of fact mere incidents of the occasion? Shall we say it is entirely reasonable so to conclude?

Gen. Dana, in commenting on the Dr. Mudd incident, says: “George Mudd, let me say in passing, never intimated to me that his friend was a doctor, or was a relative of his. I learned this the next day when it was too late (as usual he does not explain how he found it out) that his cousin was a rank rebel, and I plainly told George Mudd what I thought of him.”

Which we suggest must have been a great punishment to Dr. George Mudd and was quite the act of a hero on the part of Gen. Dana to thus occupy his time—reading lectures to Dr. George Mudd while in hot pursuit of and on the trail of the assassin of the President of the United States.

Thus spending his time at Bryantown, neglecting to go with his troops, or send them to capture Dr. Samuel Mudd at his home only three and a half miles away, in order that he might investigate the suspicious and offending conduct of Dr. Samuel Mudd, he, instead, sends a detachment of his troops with a guide to scour a nearby swamp looking for Booth and Herold, when a heavy storm came up and make it impossible to proceed with the search



BRYANTOWN,

The Place Gen. Dana Reached on the Morning and Remained
During the Day of April 15th, 1865, While Booth Was
Resting That Same Day at the Home of Dr. Mudd, Only
Three and a Half Miles Away.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON

The government for some reason took up the pursuit of Booth independent of the movements of Gen. Dana and the Army of Washington within the lines of the 3rd Brigade of Harden's Division, 22d Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. C. C. Augur, when Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, sent the following telegram to New York City:

“Washington, April 16th, 1865.

“3:20 P. M.

“Col. L. C. Baker—Come here immediately and see if you can find the murderer of the President.

“(Signed.)

EDWIN M. STANTON,

“Secretary of War.”

Early the next morning Col. Baker reached Washington, accompanied by his cousin, Lieut. L. B. Baker, a member of the Bureau, who had recently been mustered out of the First District of Columbia Cavalry.

They went at once to the office of the War Department and after a conference with Secretary Stanton, began the search for the murderer of the President.

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

“Up to this time,” says Col. Baker, “the confusion had been so great that few of the ordinary detective measures for the apprehension of criminals had been employed. No rewards had been offered. Little or no attempt had been made to collect and arrange the clue in the furtherance of a systematic search and the pursuit was wholly without a dictating leadership.”

Col. Baker's first step was the publication of a handbill offering thirty thousand dollars for the capture of the fugitives. Twenty thousand dollars of this amount was subscribed by the City of Washington and the other ten thousand dollars by Col. Baker, offered on his own account and authorized by the War Department.

On this handbill was a minute description of Booth, as follows:

“John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated the President on the evening of April 14th, 1865, height 5 feet 8 inches, weight 160 pounds, compactly built; hair jet black, inclined to curl; medium length, parted behind, eyes black, and heavy brows. Wears a large seal ring on his little finger.

“When talking inclines his head forward and looks down.

“(Signed.)

L. C. BAKER,

“Colonel and Adjutant of the War Dept.”

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

that in their search for Booth and Herold they found themselves harassed and thwarted at every turn by private detectives and soldiers of the Federal Army who tried to throw them off the trail.

Baker says they regarded Booth, Herold and others as "mere tools in the hands of more skilled conspirators." Baker was more wise than even he knew in this conclusion as the events of after years disclosed, proven by the confession of Booth himself of the plot and the persons connected with it.

"On his return to Washington Lieut. Baker told Col. Baker that it was his opinion that Booth and his companions had not gone South, but had taken some other direction, most probably toward Philadelphia, where it was known that Booth had several women friends.

" 'Now, sir,' was Col. Baker's answer, 'you are mistaken. There is no place of safety for them on earth, except among their friends in the still rebellious South.'

"Acting on this belief, Col. Baker, Theodore Woodall, one of the detectives in lower Maryland, accompanied by an expert telegrapher named Brakwith, who was to attach his instrument to the wires at any convenient point and report frequently to headquarters at Washington, started in pursuit of Booth.

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

previous afternoon and that just before starting three men had ridden up and greeted the fugitives.

“In response to questioning Rollins admitted that he knew the three men well; that they were Major M. B. Ruggles, Lieut. Bainbridge and Capt. Jett, of Mosby’s Confederate command.

“ ‘Do you know where they went?’ Baker pressed the questioning.

“ ‘Wall,’ drawled the fisherman, ‘this Capt. Jett has a lady love over at Bowling Green and I reckon he went over there.’ And he further explained that Bowling Green was about fifteen miles to the south and that it had a big hotel which would make a good hiding place for a wounded man. As the cavalry came up Baker told Rollins that he would have to accompany him as a guide until they reached Bowling Green. To this Rollins objected on the ground that he would incur the hatred of his neighbors, none of whom had favored the Union cause.

“ ‘But you might make me your prisoner,’ he said in his slow drawl, ‘then I would have to go.’ Baker felt the necessity of exercising the greatest energy in the pursuit if the fugitives were to be snatched from the shelter of the hostile country.

“ ‘Rollins’ old ferry boat was shaky and, although the loading was done with the greatest dispatch it took three trips to get the detachment across the

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

river, when the march for Bowling Green was begun. The horses sweltered up the crooked sandy road from the river. Baker and Conger, who were riding ahead, saw two horsemen standing motionless on the top of a hill, their black forms showing well against the sky. (This was Major or Lieut. Ruggles and Bainbridge on sentinel duty, guarding Booth at the Garrett farm, which was only a short distance to the north of where these men were seen).

“These men seem much interested in the movements of the cavalry. Baker and Conger at once suspected them of being Booth’s friends, who had in some way received information of the approach of the searching party.

“Baker signaled the horsemen to wait for a parley but instead of stopping they at once put spurs to their horses and galloped up the road. Conger and Baker gave chase, but they bent to the necks of their horses and riding at full speed they were away. And just as they were overhauling them the two horsemen dashed into a blind trail leading from the main road into the pine forest. (This is when Ruggles and Bainbridge rode to the Garrett home, a short distance north of the main road, in which the Federal troops then were on their way to Bowling Green, and then it was that they notified Booth to leave the Garrett home, as explained to me by St.

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

“The men spoken of by young Garrett as coming back were Herold and Ruddy, returning from Bowling Green, as prearranged at the Rappahannock Ferry, and explained to me by St. Helen (Booth) to meet Booth, who they found had gone. They remained that night with the Garretts. There was no one with Booth at the Garrett’s, and when he left he left alone. Ruggles and Bainbridge corroborate St. Helen (Booth), and say that when they returned to the Garrett home and notified Booth to leave they looked for Herold, who had not yet returned to Booth, and that Booth straightway left by himself, in the direction which they pointed out to him. So the allusion by young Garrett to the two men returning had no reference to Booth’s return, for at the time Booth left the Garrett home Herold and Ruddy had not yet reached there on their return from Bowling Green.

“Young Garrett, continuing, said to Baker: ‘We could not leave home before morning, if at all. We were becoming suspicious of them and father told them they could not stay with us.’

“‘Where are they now?’ interrupted Baker.

“‘In the barn. My brother locked them in for fear they would steal the horses. He is now keeping watch on them in the corn crib.’

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

will you? Go! I don't want you to stay!'

"At the door Herold was whimpering, 'Let me out! Let me out! I know nothing of this man in here.' (As a matter of fact Herold knew nothing of the man in there with him, who was Ruddy, with whom he had been connected only as the employe and guide for Booth, from across the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers, and with whom Herold had gone to Bowling Green and returned to the Garrett home, as explained by Booth to me.)

" 'Bring out your arms and you can surrender,' insisted Baker.

"Herold did not have any arms, and Booth (as they called him), finally said: 'He has no arms. The arms are mine, and I shall keep them.' By this time Herold was praying piteously to be let out. He said he was afraid of being shot, and begged to be allowed to surrender.

"Baker opened the door a little and told him to put out his hands. The moment the door opened Baker seized his hands and whipped Herold out of the barn and turned him over to the soldiers.

" 'You had better come out, too,' said Baker to Booth (or the man in the barn.)

" 'Tell me who you are and what you want of me. It may be that I am being taken by my friends.'

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

proof that the man in the supposed barn or crib was Booth, and that the man killed was Booth, the truth of which fact must rest on the subsequent identification of the body which Lieut. Baker carried to Washington, assuming it to be the body of Booth. Upon this proof of identification of the body by Conger, who produced Booth's two pictures and the papers mentioned, together with a carbine, a belt and a compass, they were placed in the hands of Col. Baker and were the only proof offered for the identification of Booth.

Does this prove the body to be that of Booth? No, not directly, not positively. But the evidence offered was merely circumstantial, if found on the body of the dead man, as tending to show that it was the body of Booth, upon the presumption that such things as belonged to Booth would be found on his body, but does not negative the probability or possibility of finding these matters of evidence on the body of some man other than Booth. It is claimed, and history discloses, that none of the pursuing party under Lieut. Baker, nor even he himself, knew either Booth or Herold, but they were furnished photographs of them for their identification, while at the inquest the body was not identified by the picture of Booth, so far as we are informed, though it was then and there in the possession of Lieut.

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON.

Baker. There was no further proof of the identity of the body as that of Booth except the pictures of Booth's relatives, the letters, etc., offered by Conger, and this was solely relied on. If the body had been that of Booth positive identification could have been had by comparison with his pictures, while hundreds, yea, perhaps thousands of the people living in Washington could have been called on to positively identify the dead body of Booth under oath. There were so many who knew him personally and others who had so often seen him on the stage that it would have been almost as easy to have identified the body of John Wilkes Booth as that of President Lincoln, whom he had assassinated. Why was not this done? Because even Lieut. Baker says: "Indeed, there were rumors widely circulated in certain parts of the country that Booth had never been captured." And before the trial of the conspirators was begun he was again sent into lower Maryland to collect evidence against Booth and his accomplices, and was so far successful as to find the boat in which Booth and Herold had crossed the Potomac river, and Booth's opera glasses hidden near the Garrett home, both of which he took back to Washington.

How is it that Baker, on his second visit, found Booth's opera, or field glasses, hidden near the Gar-

THE HAND OF SECRETARY STANTON

Two facts we wish to emphasize—they are unanswerable—brought out and agreed upon by all that has been written and said on the subject. They are: First, that Booth was carried to the Garrett home by Ruggles and Bainbridge, Confederate soldiers belonging to Mosby's command. Second, that Booth had notice of the pursuit by the Federal troops; that being notified by Ruggles and Bainbridge, Booth did leave the Garrett home at their urgent request for his (Booth's) safety; that they did see him leave alone, with the earnest and determined purpose to make good his escape, with a full knowledge of his present and impending danger of being captured, which he knew was death.

Can any one, under these circumstances and conditions, believe that Booth did not go and continue to go? Can any one believe that he would at that time have returned to the Garrett home? The sane and reasonable answer to these queries is unquestionably and unequivocally—NO.

CHAPTER XII.

GEN. DANA IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

After having read the publication of Gen. Dana in December, 1897, I remembered anew the incidents connected with the confessions of St. Helen and went persistently to work to ascertain, if possible, the truth with respect to the escape of John Wilkes Booth.

I wrote at once to Gen. Dana for further facts.

Having no knowledge whatever of the Booth family before my meeting with St. Helen, I could only explain the information I had received from him concerning this family and the escape of John Wilkes Booth upon the theory that St. Helen was related to Herold and knew Booth's personal and family affairs by reason of his association with either Booth or Herold, or both. So, I assumed, without foundation in fact, that the tintype picture of himself given me by St. Helen when he believed he was dying must be a picture of some one of the Herolds. So I wrote Gen. Dana, who in return sent me the first pictures I ever remember to have

GEN. DANA IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

seen of Booth, also Herold and others. I at once identified John Wilkes Booth for the first time, by comparing the tintype picture of St. Helen with the picture of John Wilkes Booth sent me by Dana. St. Helen was indeed the man he claimed to be—John Wilkes Booth. I at once had a picture made from the tintype and sent it to Dana, whose reply, from Lubec, Maine, January 17, 1898, with respect to this picture, is as follows:

“Dear Sir: Your favor of January 8th at hand and read. I must say I was somewhat surprised at the turn things took, for I expected the likeness of Herold, or that it would have some of the features in it of the man Herold you wrote me about, but it seems it was Booth instead.

“Can this be J. B. Booth, brother of John Wilkes Booth? Will it be asking too much of you to send me a copy of the confession which you have? I would like to have it for my own satisfaction. If I can be of any help to you, will gladly aid all I can. Regarding J. B. Booth, I shall write to some one of the Booth family and learn all I can of his death, and where. When received will send to you.

“Respectfully yours, etc.,

“(Signed.)

DAVID D. DANA.”

GEN. DANA IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

Especial attention is called to Gen. Dana's identification of the tintype picture as that of John Wilkes Booth, and his intimate knowledge of the Booth family, asking as he does if this picture is that of his brother, J. B. Booth, and the readiness with which he could approach "some one of the Booth family and learn all I can of his death," getting all the information he desired of J. B. Booth, whom he claimed to be dead, and whose name had in no way been brought into the discussion except by Gen. Dana. But for some reason unknown to me Gen. Dana did not write giving me the information which he had voluntarily promised.

Why?

I have since learned, however, that the brother of Booth unmistakably referred to by Gen. Dana as J. B. Booth was Junius Brutus Booth, the oldest brother of John Wilkes Booth, who, with the exception of a few years spent in the West, lived and died in Boston, Mass. The next eldest brother lived and died in New York City. The youngest brother, Dr. Joseph Adrian Booth, a physician of acknowledged ability, was associated with his brother, Edwin Booth, the famous actor of New York City, in a business way other than that of acting, as he made no pretention to the stage, died some years ago, I am informed.

GEN. DANA IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

Of these four brothers only John Wilkes Booth came South, and he only after the assassination of President Lincoln, the other brothers living and dying in the East.

The entire Booth family, consisting of two sisters and four brothers, of which John Wilkes was one, were similar in appearance, and you would recognize a family likeness, yet they were very unlike in many features, so that no one knowing the family could mistake one for the other. This statement is made from actual knowledge, for I have before me the pictures of the entire Booth family, the father and mother, four brothers and two sisters, which constitutes the entire family. Should any one doubt the accuracy of this statement or be curious to see, he may dispel the one and gratify the other by securing a copy of the Cincinnati Enquirer, published April 27, 1902, and find the group referred to at page 1, section 4, of this Sunday edition, a study of which I affirm will prove the statements made by me in regard to the Booth family.

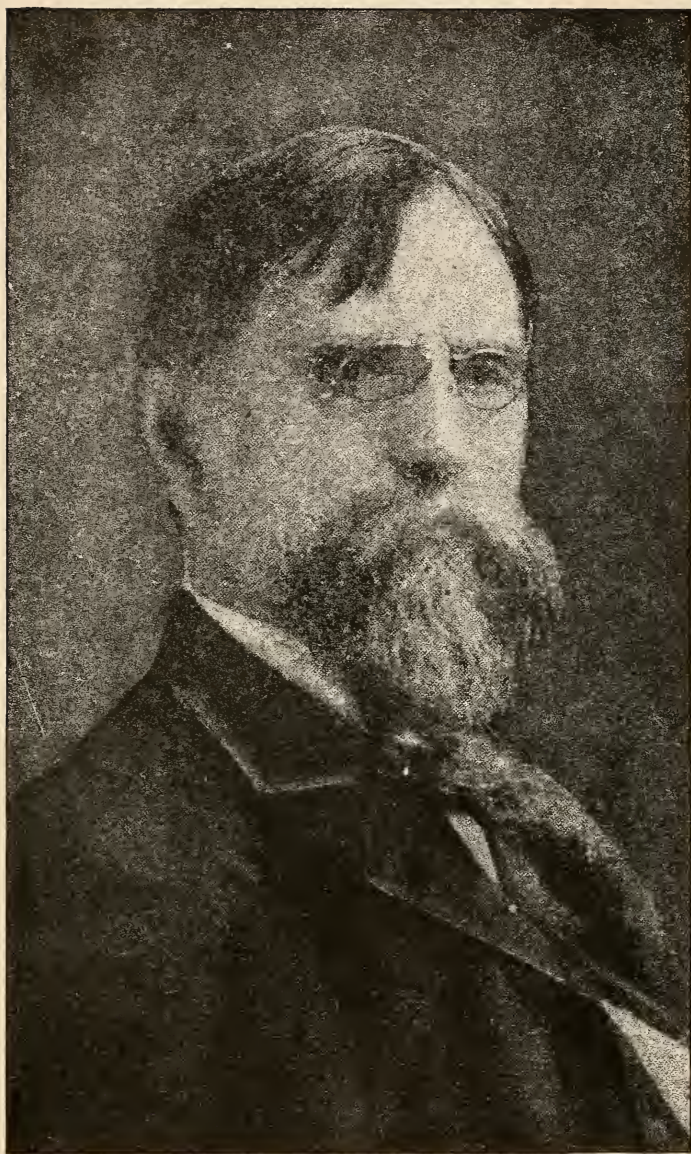
The identification of the tintype picture of St. Helen as that of John Wilkes Booth by Gen. Dana stirred to activity my resting energies and revived my purpose to investigate. I at once began to call for proof of the death of John Wilkes Booth, and began by asking of Dana what evidence they had

GEN. DANA IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

dead body is supposed to have lain on the boat at Washington?

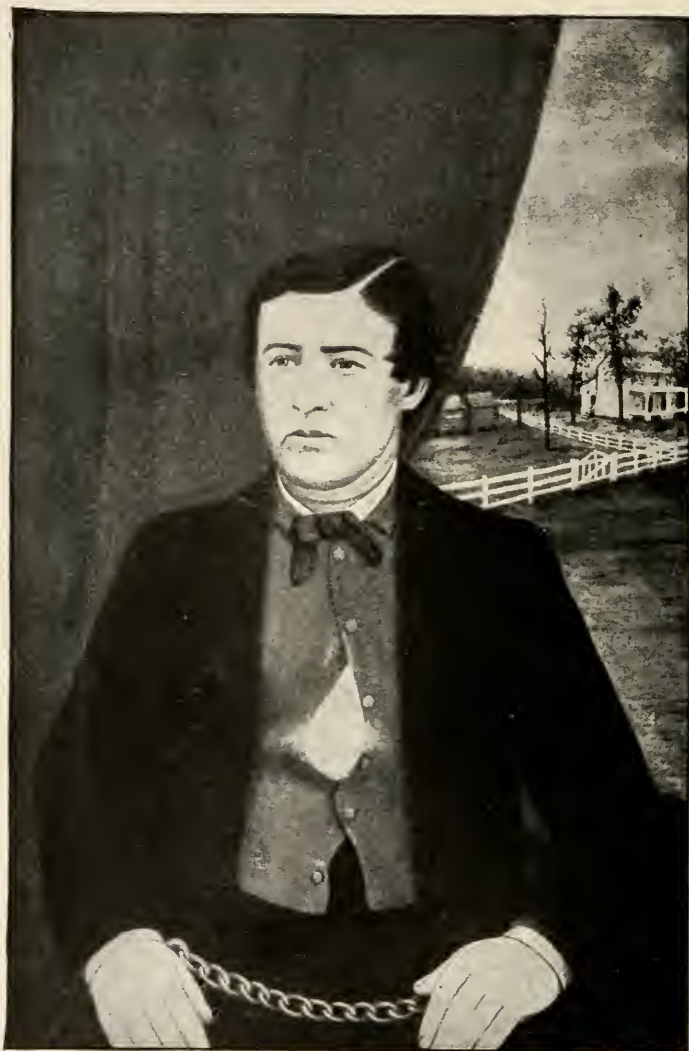
This leaves a doubt in the minds of all men who read this state of facts. Under the rule of law in the application of evidence in matters criminal the doubt resolves itself against the truth of the witness and the benefit of the doubt is given to the defendant, Booth. Dana both identifies the supposed body of Booth on the boat and then unquestionably identifies the living Booth from the tintype picture, taken as before stated. This being true, then applying the legal rule as to civil proof, his evidence stands at an equipoise, and under that condition we find in favor of Booth's escape until there is a preponderance of proof to the contrary.

Being advised that Gen. Lew Wallace was the only surviving member of the military court which tried and convicted David E. Herold, Mrs. Surratt and others, by the judgment of which court Herold and Mrs. Surratt were hanged and the others convicted, I wrote under the date of January 25, 1898, calling on Gen. Wallace for the proof which was heard at that court. I also asked for such evidence as was then and now in possession of the government of the United States showing that Booth had been captured and killed.



GEN. LEW WALLACE.

One of the Military Court Who Sentenced Mrs. Surratt and
Others to Be Hanged.



DAVID E. HEROLD.

The Accomplice of John Wilkes Booth, and the Garrett Home, Where He Was Captured, Ruddy Killed, and From Which Booth Escaped, Going to the Wooded Spot Just North of the House.

CHAPTER XIV.

INFORMING THE WAR DEPARTMENT THAT BOOTH LIVES.

Being convinced that John St. Helen was actually John Wilkes Booth, I determined to locate him, and with this purpose in view I addressed a letter to a personal friend, a lawyer, at Grandberry, Texas, receiving this reply:

“Grandberry, Texas, September 21st, 1898.

“N. L. Cooper & Sons, Attorneys at Law.

F. L. Bates:—

“Dear Sir and Friend—I have made many inquiries about the latter end of St. Helen, if he should have crossed the Jordan, but can make but little discovery. L. B. McClannahan, who was in partnership with A. P. Gordon, in the whiskey business, on the south side of the square, now lives at Bluffdale, eighteen miles southwest from here, on the railroad in Erath county, may know something of St. Helen; also William Farmwalt, whose address is Maryfa, Presideo county, Texas, and G. W. Calvin, Kerrville, Texas.

INFORMING WAR DEPARTMENT THAT BOOTH LIVES.

efforts to assist Booth in his escape. Sixteen years after he settled in Baltimore he was attacked with paresis, and died at the hospital of Williamsburg, Virginia, repsected by all who knew him.

(Signed.) "JOHN L. MARYE."

Lieut. A. R. Bainbridge, after the close of the war, went to New York City and entered business. Jett, Bainbridge and Ruggles were the members of Mosby's Confederate command who met Booth and Harold at the Rappahannock ferry, and described Booth as wearing at this time a black slouch hat, well pulled down on his forehead, the lame foot was entirely free from covering except a black sock. The crutch or stick which he carried was rough and ungainly. They further say, speaking of the following afternoon: "After we had crossed Booth to the Garrett farm we saw the Federal troops across the Rappahannock river, and we (Ruggles and Bainbridge) were pursued by them, when we fled straight to the Garrett farm and notified Booth to leave, directing him to go into the wooded ravine, which we pointed out to him, over and beyond the Garrett farm, for which place he left at once, carrying a

INFORMING WAR DEPARTMENT THAT BOOTH LIVES.

heavy stick in his hand to support his lame leg.”

Through inquiry of a person now in Washington City, whose name it would be an abuse of confidence to disclose, I learned that there was a large family of people by the name of Ruddy living within the immediate neighborhood of Samuel Cox, on the Potomac river, where Booth was secreted, so that I take it the man killed at the Garrett farm was “Ruddy” and not “Roby,” as several of the men of the Ruddy family answer the description Booth gave of the man who got his letters, pictures, check, etc.

The statements of these gentlemen, Jett, Ruggles and Bainbridge, corroborate St. Helen’s story that he (Booth) was met by these gentlemen, Confederate soldiers, at the Rappahannock ferry. Could this have been an incident? Surely it was prearranged. These gentlemen say: “We met Booth at the ferry,” but do not say by accident, a mere casualty and seemingly it was by appointment, at a stated time; they had arrived at the ferry in advance of Booth, as if to receive and protect him on his arrival.

INFORMING WAR DEPARTMENT THAT BOOTH LIVES.

Neither Booth nor Herold could have gone to arrange this appointment. Booth was lame and Herold did not know the country in that direction, so remained with Booth, who was suffering a great deal. There can be no well founded doubt but that Ruddy went in advance and made this appointment as detailed to me by St. Helen (Booth).

After successfully locating St. Helen (Booth) at Leadville and later at Fresno, California, I was reasonably sure he still lived and could be located, and supposing it to be a matter of interest to the United States government, I addressed the following letter to the War Department:

“Law Office of F. L. BATES,

“297 Second Street,

“Memphis, Tenn., January 17th, 1898.

“Secretary of War, Washington, D. C.

“Dear Sir—Would it be a matter of any importance to develop the fact to the War Department of the United States that John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Lincoln, was not captured and killed by the Federal troops, as is supposed? —

INFORMING WAR DEPARTMENT THAT BOOTH LIVES.

“By accident I have been placed in possession of such facts as are conclusive that John Wilkes Booth now lives, and have kept the matter from publication until I have communicated with the War Department of this government. Very truly yours,
“F. L. BATES.”

In reply the following endorsements were made on this letter and returned to me, viz.:

First endorsement:

“Office of the Secretary of War Department.

“January 19th, 1898.

(294) “Memphis, Tenn., Jan. 17th, 1898.

“F. L. Bates says that he is in possession of such facts as are conclusive that John Wilkes Booth was not captured and killed by the Federal troops, and asks if War Department would consider the matter of enough importance to develop that fact.

“JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL.”

Second endorsement:

(3808) “War Department,

“Judge Advocate General’s Office,

“Washington, D. C.

January 21st, 1898.

INFORMING WAR DEPARTMENT THAT BOOTH LIVES.

“Respectfully returned to the Secretary of War.

“This is a request by F. L. Bates, of Memphis, Tenn., for information as to whether it would be a matter of importance to develop the fact to the War Department that John Wilkes Booth was not captured and killed by the Federal troops.

“He says that by accident he has recently been placed in possession of such facts as are conclusive.

“It is recommended that he be informed that the matter is of no importance to the War Department.

(Signed) G. NORMAN LIEBER,

“Judge Advocate General.”

“Received back War Department January 22d, 1898.

(294)

“Assistant Secretary.”

(L. S. S.)

Third endorsemen

“War Department.

“January 25th, 1898.

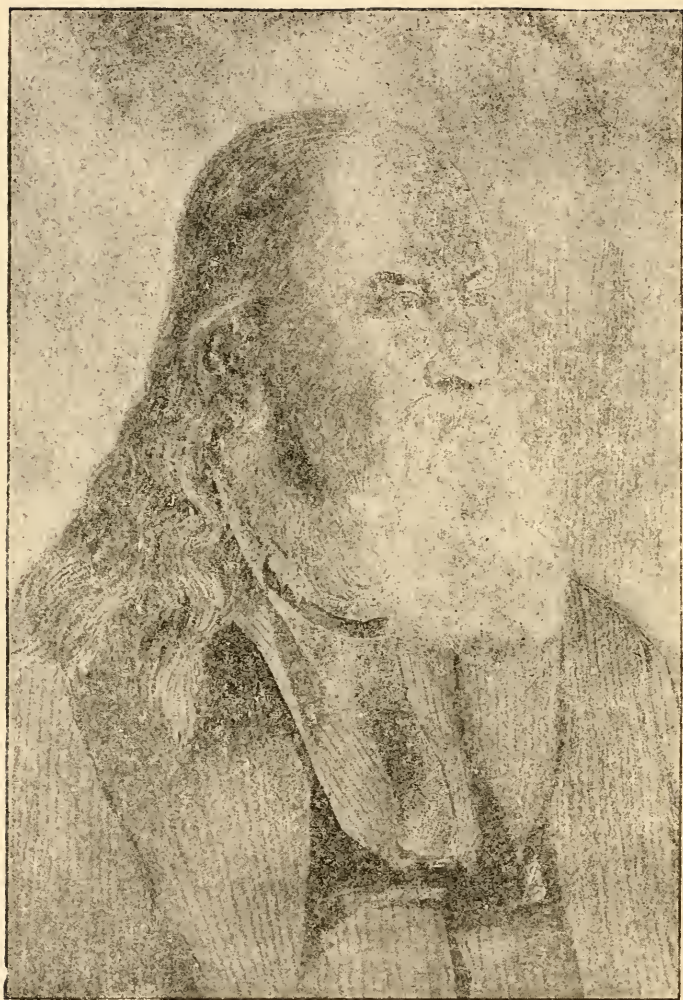
“Respectfully returned to Mr. F. L. Bates, No. 272 Second street, Memphis, Tenn., inviting attention to the foregoing report of the Judge Advocate General of the Army.

INFORMING WAR DEPARTMENT THAT BOOTH LIVES.

(Signed) "G. D. MICKLEJOHN,
"Acting Secretary of War."

In view of the fact that the War Department would take no action upon the information furnished of the then living Booth, on January 19th, January 21st and January 25th, 1898, notwithstanding that the officials of the War Department were fully advised that there was no positive or direct proof on file with the government as to the death of John Wilkes Booth, as is fully shown by the letter of John P. Simonton, of the War Department, of date May 11th, 1898, almost five months later, I ask then why should these officials refuse to investigate the proof of these facts when offered? It must, therefore, follow that the officials, having only circumstantial proof of the death of Booth, did not want and refused to consider proof of the fact that Booth still lived, and went so far as to say that it was a matter of no importance to the War Department to establish the truth that Booth was not killed, as supposed, or that he was still alive.

Does such a declaration, coming as an official finding of the War Department, assist in and perpet-



GEN. ALBERT PIKE.

The Veteran Mason, Statesman, Lawyer and Poet, as He
Appeared at the Time of His Recognition of John Wilkes
Booth at Fort Worth, Texas, in 1885.

CHAPTER XV.

GEN. ALBERT PIKE IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

While trying to trace Booth after he left Fresno, California, I read a story from Col. Edward Levan, of Monterey, Mexico. He says that a man whom he believed to be Booth roomed with him during the winter of 1868, in Lexington, Kentucky. The two became quite friendly, and Col. Levan openly declared to the man, who was going by the name of J. J. Marr, that he believed him to be John Wilkes Booth. Mr. Marr did not deny the allegation, but shortly thereafter left Lexington, where he was "playing the character of a lawyer."

Col. Levan says that he afterward learned that Mr. Marr had settled at Village Mills, Texas, and from there went to Glenrose Mills, Texas, at which place I first met John St. Helen, and where he declared himself to be John Wilkes Booth.

Col. M. W. Connolly, a distinguished newspaper man, at present and for many years past connected

GEN. ALBERT PIKE IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

at LaGrange. Capt. Day, of Day & Maas, proprietors, was behind the bar. It was in 1884 or 1885, and we were unconventional then.

“Tom Powell, mayor of Fort Worth, joined us, and Temple Houston, youngest son of the ex-Governor of Tennessee, the man who whipped Santa Anna at San Jacinto, and the first president of the Texas republic (Gen Sam Houston), was there. I was about to leave, was waiting for a pause in order to excuse myself; Gen. Pike was explaining how he had been credited with the authorship of ‘The Old Canoe,’ which he said was written by some woman; just then my Village Mills friend came in accompanied by some one, I think Long Scurlock, who used to edit the Chronicle at Cleburne, Texas. Capt. Day turned to make a change. I was watching Gen. Pike closely (trying to get away), when suddenly he threw up his hands, his face white as his hair and beard, and exclaimed:

“‘My God! John Wilkes Booth!’ He was much excited, trembled like an aspen, and at my suggestion went to his room. He seemed weakened by the shock, the occasion of which I could not realize at

GEN. ALBERT PIKE IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

rie, Oklahoma Territory, but was located at Hennessy, Oklahoma Territory, in the year 1896, playing the role of a gentleman of leisure, under the name of George D. Ryan, where he remained until some time in the year 1899, when he located at El Reno, Oklahoma Territory, sixty-five miles south of Hennessy, stopping at the Anstein hotel, where he was domiciled in 1898 when I took up the matter with the government authorities at Washington.

On moving to El Reno, in 1899, Booth made deposits of money, opening an account with the State bank of that place, under the name of David E. George. Assuming the character of a journeyman house painter he took a contract and painted a small cottage for Mr. Anstien, the proprietor of the Anstein hotel, and advertised himself as David E. George, house painter, in the Daily Democrat, a newspaper published at El Reno, but took no jobs of painting after that first one for Mr. Anstien, and did no other work in this nor any other business at El Reno.

At the El Reno State bank, where Booth made his deposits as David E. George, the tintype picture of

GEN. ALBERT PIKE IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

St. Helen (Booth), taken twelve years after the assassination of President Lincoln, was at once identified by the officials of the bank as being a true likeness of the man David E. George, who made the deposits at their bank and with whom they were personally acquainted. At the request of Mr. Bellamy, one of the bank officials, I went with him to another bank, the name of which I do not now remember, and was introduced to the president of this bank, whose name I believe was Dr. Davis, who at once identified the tintype picture of St. Helen as a true and correct likeness of David E. George.

After remaining at the Anstien Hotel for quite a long while David E. George (Booth) bought a cottage at El Reno, paying thirty-five hundred dollars for it, where he installed a family by the name of Simmons, who were to board him for the rent of the place. He told the Anstiens that he was tired of hotel life and requested them to look for a wife for him, saying in a joking way that he would pay handsomely for one well suiting his fancy, who would be willing to take charge of his cottage home.



Booth (as D. E. George) Playing the Role of a House Painter,
and the Only Painting Job He Ever Did.

GEN. ALBERT PIKE IDENTIFIES BOOTH.

at the Grand Avenue Hotel, under the name of David E. George. In the meantime Mr. Harper and his wife had removed from El Reno to Enid, from which place she made the following statement:

“Enid, Oklahoma Territory, Jan. 23d, 1903.

“On the evening of January 13th, I was startled and surprised by reading in the Enid Daily News of the suicide of David E. George, of El Reno, with whom I first became acquainted in March, 1900, in El Reno, at the home of Mr. Simmons.

“Mr. Harper went down on Wednesday morning, the 14th instant, and recognized him, and told the embalmers of a confession that David E. George had made to myself, and that they had better investigate.

“I went to the morgue with Mr. Harper on the 15th and identified the corpse of David E. George as the man who had confessed to me at El Reno that he was John Wilkes Booth, and, as brevity has been enjoined on me, will reaffirm my former statement made in detail of David E. George’s confession to me at El Reno, about the middle of April, 1900, as fully as if same were set forth herein.

(Signed.)

“MRS. E. C. HARPER.”

CHAPTER XVI.

PRESS COMMENTS ON THE SUICIDE OF DAVID E. GEORGE.

“Enid Wave: Enid, Oklahoma Territory, January 17th, 1903.—(Special.)—*David E. George, a wealthy resident of the Territory, who committed suicide here, announced himself on his deathbed to be John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Lincoln.* He stated that he had successfully eluded the officers after shooting Lincoln and since had remained incognito. His statement caused a sensation, and an investigation was made. Surgeons examined the body and stated the man to be of the age Booth would be at this time, and announced that his leg was broken in the same place and in the same manner as that of Booth after jumping from the President’s box at Ford’s Theater after the assassination. All the time George has received money regularly from unknown sources, and telegrams arriving yesterday and today ask that the body be held for identification. It is claimed that one telegram

PRESS COMMENTS ON SUICIDE OF DAVID E. GEORGE.

from Memphis, Tennessee, and asserted that his client was none other than the slayer of President Lincoln.”

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch contained the following:

“St. Louis, Mo., June 3d, 1903.—A special from Enid, Oklahoma, says: ‘Junius Brutus Booth, the actor, a nephew of John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Lincoln, has fully identified from photographs, etc., the man, David E. George, as his uncle, John Wilkes Booth.’

“George, or Booth, committed suicide here January 13th last, and in his effects was found a letter directed to F. L. Bates, Memphis, Tenn., who came here at once and identified the body as that of John Wilkes Booth, and has since secured confirmation of his statement that George is in fact Booth.”

The foregoing are a few of the many comments in the various publications made at the time of the suicide confirming the identification of the man known as George to be John Wilkes Booth, showing and reflecting the opinion of the disinterested masses through the expressions of the press, the best and

PRESS COMMENTS ON SUICIDE OF DAVID E. GEORGE.

house. This gentleman led us through a back way to the morgue, which we entered from a rear door into the front room, where lay the body of John Wilkes Booth, the man who had been called by the people in this community David E. George. In the presence of the attendant and Mr. Pennaman, cold, stiff and dead, I beheld the body of my friend, John St. Helen. After a separation of more than twenty-six years I knew him as instantly as men discern night from day, as the starlight from moonlight, or the moon from the light of day.

You ask what did I say? I don't know. Mr. Pennaman says I exclaimed, "My God! St. Helen, is it possible?" Then my manhood softened into sentiment and soul into tears. Spread the veil of charity upon the deeds of the dead, that mantle of death cast in the loom of sorrow and woven in the warp and woof of sighs and tears. Shaken with emotion for my dead friend, I had no thought of the crime that this man had committed while his body lay at rest, seeming to sleep in pleasant repose.

In a few minutes I recovered. I realized now for the first time that I was in the presence of John

CHAPTER XVIII.

READING THE PALM OF JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

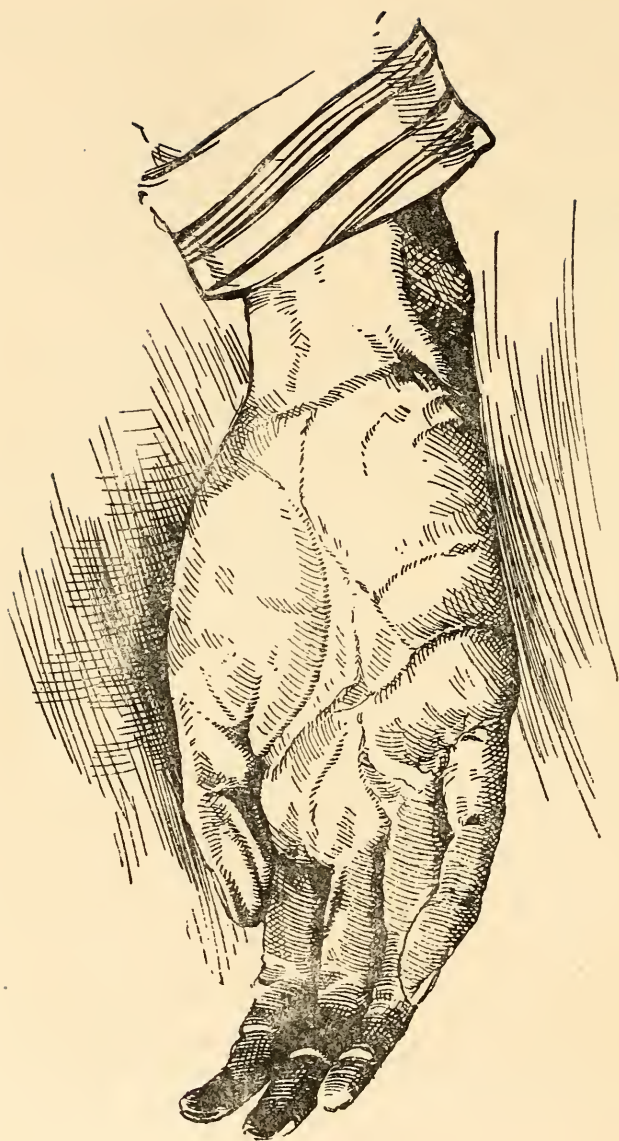
After remaining in El Reno about forty-eight hours, having completed my investigation of Booth's identity, I returned to my home in Memphis, Tennessee, without further incident. Scarcely had I reached home, however, when I was recalled to Enid by the administrator of Booth's estate. On my return I found public sentiment in Enid much quieted down and it was no longer necessary for me to impersonate the character of another. I found that two men supposed to be in the secret service of the United States government—which fact they did not deny—had requested and been permitted to view the body of Booth. They were provided with pictures of John Wilkes Booth, which they compared with Booth's body, and having satisfied themselves that the body was that of Booth, they appealed to the Territorial legal authorities to compel the burial of the body, without denying at any time that

READING THE PALM OF JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

the body was that of John Wilkes Booth. But before I reached Enid the matter had been satisfactorily arranged, in what way I did not at that time learn, and I found the body unburied and in a state of perfect preservation, still being held for further identification, challenging, as it were, those in authority, or those of contrary opinion, to show that this body was not that of John Wilkes Booth.

During this visit I learned that Mr. L. Treadkell, who had employed Booth as a teamster, as heretofore mentioned, was then living within nine miles of the city. I at once communicated with him and he came in. On being shown the tintype picture of St. Helen, so often referred to, he readily identified it as the picture of Jesse Smith, his teamster in the early part of the year 1867. He also identified the picture of Booth at the ages of twenty-seven, thirty-eight and sixty-four as being pictures taken from one and the same man, the only difference being the matter of age.

During this visit Bentley Sage, the well known palmist, made the trip to Enid for the express purpose of examining the palms of the now notorious

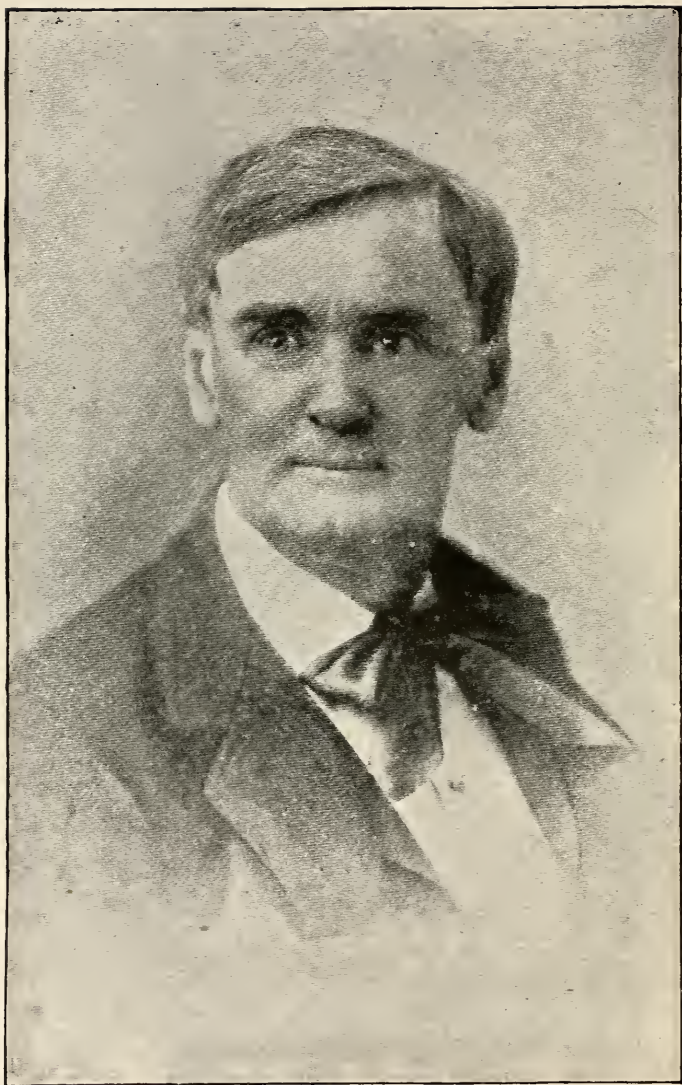


THE MUMMIFIED HAND OF JOHN WILKES BOOTH.
As Read By Prof. Bentley Sage.



THE HOME OF DR. MUDD AND THE RIDING BOOT
OF BOOTH.

Which Was Taken Off the Injured Limb of John Wilkes
Booth by Dr. Mudd on the Morning of the 15th of April,
1865, Where It Was Afterward Recovered by the Federal
Troops.



JOSEPH JEFFERSON.

As He Appeared at the Interview With Mr. Bates at the
Gayoso Hotel, Memphis, Tennessee.

CHAPTER XIX.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON IDENTIFIES JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

Being a constant attendant at the theaters at El Reno, Enid, Oklahoma City and Guthrie in the early part of December, 1900, Booth was much struck by the genius of the leading lady of one of the companies then playing in these towns, beginning at Enid. In fact, Booth regarded her as a genius and sought an introduction through her manager, claiming at the time to be a correspondent of the *Dramatic Mirror* of New York, and giving his name as J. L. Harris. This young lady is a woman of the highest type and character, and finally the relation of pupil and instructor was established between them, Booth, the supposed correspondent, going with the company from Enid to El Reno, Guthrie and Oklahoma City for the purpose of coaching, watching and training the young actress after his own peculiar manner of acting. Being satisfied with

JOSEPH JEFFERSON IDENTIFIES JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

Jefferson the tintype picture, so often mentioned herein and recogniezd as John Wilkes Booth, he took the picture in his hand, saying:

“This is John Wilkes Booth, if John Wilkes Booth was living when this picture was taken.” He continued to hold the picture in his hand and in front of his eyes during the entire interview, which lasted more than two hours. I should not say, and do not mean to convey the idea that Mr. Jefferson kept the picture constantly before his eyes, but that he held it the entire time, making long studied examinations of it during the interview and finally said:

“This, sir, I should say, is John Wilkes Booth, but he is older than when I saw him last. I have not seen him since a short time before he killed President Lincoln, at which time I think he was about twenty-seven years of age.” After this Mr. Jefferson gave me the history of John Wilkes Booth, from his boyhood up as well as the history of John Wilkes Booth’s entire family. And in this connection as a matter of history I deem it my duty to say that I was impressed with the idea that Mr. Jefferson was by no means surprised to see a picture of John

CHAPTER XX.

JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH IDENTIFIES HIS UNCLE, JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

While Mr. Junius Brutus Booth was in the city of Memphis, playing an engagement at the Lyceum Theater in support of Mrs. Brune, I sought an introduction to him, and by pre-arrangement was accorded an interview at my office, which lasted for several hours, being of much interest to myself as well as Mr. Booth. At this meeting, because of my former meeting and friendship for and close association with John St. Helen, I was enabled to recount to him much of the private history of the Booth family, which was enjoyed by Mr. Booth with an interest equalled only by his astonishment.

After conversing with Mr. Booth for some moments I handed him the now famous tintype of John St. Helen and asked him ·

“Who is this man?”

JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH IDENTIFIES HIS UNCLE,

Mr. Booth took the picture, held it in his hand several minutes, looked at it critically, walked over to the window to get a better light on it and looked at it long and earnestly, finally to my intense surprise he suddenly exclaimed, wringing his hands in grief and excitement:

“Was my father’s confidence in me a lie, and did he indeed die with the secret that my uncle still lived untold on his lips?”

After several minutes he controlled himself with great effort and said to me:

“This is a picture of my uncle, John Wilkes, Mr. Bates, and the best one of him that I have ever seen. There is much that I want to say to you, many questions I must have answered, but this discovery has so astounded and shocked me that I must leave you now. I want to talk the whole matter over with my wife, who is with me in this city. She will understand me and my feeling in this matter. To have so nearly met my uncle, and to find that he has been dead less than a month is very distressing.”

Being again overcome by his feelings, Mr. Booth ended the interview, we separating with the promise to meet again the next morning.

The following morning promptly at the time appointed Mr. Booth walked into my office. We talked long and earnestly. I told him again the

JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

story of John St. Helen's long life in the West, of the story he had told me of himself, his crime, and his wanderings. Mr. Booth listened, intensely interested, with excitement and often with tears in his eyes, to the recital, for the first time hearing the whole story, just twenty-eight days after the self-inflicted death of the uncle whom he had never seen, and had always believed to have been killed years before by Boston Corbett.

After much further conversation Mr. Booth requested me to call a stenographer, that he might furnish me a voluntary statement of identification of the picture as John Wilkes Booth. I called Miss F. Wolf, who took down the following interview, which was signed and delivered to me by Mr. Booth, whom I count it a pleasure and a privilege to have met, and shall remember with great kindness.

MR. BOOTH'S VOLUNTARY STATEMENT OF IDENTIFICATION.

"Mr. F. L. Bates: 'I hand you, Mr. Junius Brutus Booth, a tintype picture which was taken at Glenrose Mills, Hood county, Texas, on or about June, 1877, and which was handed to me by one John St. Helen, as a means of at some future time identifying John Wilkes Booth. Will you kindly examine this picture, and in your own way identify the same?'"

JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH IDENTIFIES HIS UNCLE,

"I, Junius Brutus Booth, of the city of Boston, Massachusetts, recognize the likeness of John Wilkes Booth, not only in comparison with other photographs and pictures of said John Wilkes Booth, but I can also trace a strong family resemblance and a likeness to different members of my family in the said tintype.

"I am the oldest son of John Wilkes' brother, Junius Brutus Booth, was born in Boston January 6th, 1868. Those now living having any direct relation to John Wilkes Booth are first, myself and my brother, Syndey Booth, 16 Grammercy Park, New York; Creston Clarke, 16 Grammercy Park, New York; Wilfred Clarke, New York; Dollie Clarke Morgan, Vendome Hotel, New York; Adrienne Clarke, Brighton, England, children of Asia Booth, the sister of John Wilkes. Marion Booth, daughter of Junius Brutus, said John Wilkes' brother, also being my half sister, New York.

"The family of John Wilkes Booth's father, Junius Brutus Booth, the elder, and his wife, Mary Booth, consisted of my father, Junius Brutus Booth the eldest, Rosalie Booth, Asia Booth, Edwin Thomas Booth and Joseph Adrian Booth. Subsequent or prior to my father's birth there was another son, who died in infancy.

JOHN WILKES BOOTH.

"The Clarkes mentioned are connected with John Wilkes Booth by the marriage of his sister, Asia Booth, to John Sleeper Clarke.

(Signed) "JUNIUS BRUTUS BOOTH."

"Witness: F. L. BATES."

"I, a stenographer, wrote the above on the typewriter at the dictation of one signing himself as above, Junius Brutus Booth.

(Signed) "MISS F. WOLF."

"Personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for the county of Shelby and State of Tennessee, Miss F. Wolf, who after being duly sworn, made oath that she was the stenographer who wrote this hereto attached typewritten instrument at the dictation of one who signed himself as above, Junius Brutus Booth.

"Signed at Memphis on this 21st day of February, 1903.

"H. C. SHELTON,

"Notary Public, Shelby County, Tennessee."

Mr. Junius Brutus Booth is the oldest living nephew of John Wilkes Booth.

By the authority of these identifications of the tin-type picture of John St. Helen as being that of John Wilkes Booth by his nephew, Junius Brutus Booth, and the late Joseph Jefferson, the veteran actor and the world renowned Rip Van Winkle, supplemented

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FULL CONFESSION OF HIS IDENTITY

to his young friend and attorney, F. L. Bates.

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